

## Arabiya pays tribute to ties with Russia

AMMAN (Petra) — Lower House of Parliament Speaker Abdul Latif Arabiyat received at Parliament Saturday a delegation representing the Higher Soviet Council of Russian Federation. Dr. Arabiyat commended relations between Jordan and Russia, saying this relationship extends back to many years. He also reviewed the effects of the Gulf crisis on Jordan and the Arab region and called for ending the embargo imposed on Iraq since its invasion of Kuwait in 1990. Dr. Arabiyat also dwelt on the plight of the Palestinian people living under Israeli occupation and Israel's violations of international laws, pointing out to Israel's recent decision to expel 415 Palestinians from their homeland to Lebanon.

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## Cabinet holds meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cabinet approved Saturday a recommendation by Social Development Minister Amin Mashaqbeh allowing the Union of Voluntary Societies in Tafleeh to purchase a piece of land to construct a building and to exempt the union all required fees. The Cabinet also approved a draft agreement on extending a loan worth five million ECUs (European currency units) to the Water Authority of Jordan to use it in Irbid and Ramtha water network project. It also approved Jordan's participation in the meetings of the permanent Arab Information Committee to be held in Cairo Jan. 5-7. The Jordanian delegation to the meetings will be headed by Director of Jordan Television Ibrahim Shabada.

## Bashir urges rivals to reconcile with him

KHARTOUM (AP) — Sudanese leader Omar Hassan Al Bashir Friday called once more for a reconciliation with political opponents and affirmed his willingness to negotiate a peaceful solution to the conflict in Sudan. "We declare it again and again, the doors of Sudan are open to every one who wants to join in the national building of Sudan," Lieutenant-General Bashir said in a speech marking the 37th anniversary of Sudan's independence. "There is no exclusion or isolation for any citizen," he said in a live radio broadcast from Al Obied, capital of Kordofan in western Sudan. He warned Sudanese opponents now in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Britain and the United States, that "the masses will cast you away" if they did not respond to his appeal.

## Moderate quake rocks south Iran

NICOSIA (AP) — A moderate earthquake, measuring 4.6 degrees on the Richter scale, jolted Iran's southern Khuzestan province Saturday morning, the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported. The quake occurred at 7:13 a.m. (0343 GMT), causing no casualties or major damage, it said. The agency, monitored in Nicosia, said the geophysics department at Tehran University recorded the epicentre of the quake 450 kilometres southwest of Tehran. The Richter scale is a gauge of the energy released by an earthquake, as measured by the ground motion recorded on a seismograph. A quake of magnitude 5 can cause considerable damage.

## Chinese aide negative on British ties

HONG KONG (AP) — A senior Chinese official said he does not foresee any improvement in Sino-British relations unless Hong Kong Governor Chris Patten scraps his planned democratic reforms for the territory, a local television station reported Saturday. Television Broadcasts (TVB) quoted Lu Ping, director of Beijing's Macao and Hong Kong affairs office, as saying in an interview that if "Britain stands tough, then I will have to follow suit."

## Germany to use radar to stop illegals

FRANKFURT (AP) — Germany plans to use radar and infrared electronics to stop illegal entry of refugees, the government said Saturday. German officials estimate that a half-million people sought asylum in 1992. More than 2,100 attacks were reported against foreigners in 1992. Extreme rightists killed 17 people, including Germans and foreigners. Although the government and the opposition announced agreement last month on a plan to slash the number of refugees, the plan may unravel before parliament can act on it. In Bonn, Interior Ministry spokesman Roland Bachmeier confirmed a newspaper report that the government plans to install "modern radar and infrared electronic devices to catch refugees trying to enter the country illegally." The Bild newspaper said the devices were to make up for a shortage of border police to stop illegal asylum-seekers, mostly from Eastern Europe, who have been flooding Germany over its borders with Poland and the new Czech republic.

# Standoff continues over evictees; Hussein rejects Rabin's conditional offer

MARI AL ZOHOUR (Agencies) — As 415 Palestinians expelled from the occupied territories from Israel made do in between Israel and Lebanon, the two countries remained at an impasse over the return of 10 of them Israel says were mistakenly expelled.

Palestinian leader Faisal Hussein accused Israel of using the 415 as "hostages" by offering to release them early if the uprising was halted. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said the 415, could start returning in nine months if Palestinians immediately stopped the five-year-old revolt against Israeli rule in the occupied territories. Mr. Rabin added that he made the offer on Friday because he knew it was virtually "a pipe dream."

## European border checks disappear

REMICH, Luxembourg (AP) — Volker Petzinger woke up Friday to a Europe without border crossings, and to his first day as a customs officer on the Luxembourg-Germany border. "This post is going to be staffed 24 hours a day, but I tell you, I don't know what we're going to do," he laughed as cars sped by, barely slowing down. On Friday, Jan. 1, rules requiring customs and most passport checks among the European Community's (EC) 12 members came tumbling down. "Last week there were thirty officers at this post," said Mr. Petzinger, who until Dec. 31 was a German customs inspector on the Moselle River between France and Germany. "Today, it's just me."

## Afghan president sworn in, appeals for national unity

KABUL (R) — Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani, elected this week by a controversial assembly, was sworn in Saturday for a two-year term and appealed to his opponents to back him. Mr. Rabbani, in his first public speech since his election on Wednesday, described those drawing battle lines against his Islamic government as heretics, but asked for support. He said opponents should bow to what he called the "nation's will and decision."

Palestinian spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawi suggested that Mr. Rabin did not make the offer in good faith. "If the heads of the PLO and Hamas say, 'we promise peace and quiet, a stop to the infidels' for nine months, I would return them," Mr. Rabin said Friday.

Dr. Ashrawi, spokeswoman for the Palestinian delegation to the Middle East peace talks in Washington, said the uprising would end when Israel withdraws from the territories. "When Israel has done something illegal, it cannot try and find a way out through this kind of bargaining," she said. Mr. Rabin said in a radio interview broadcast Saturday he was at peace with his decision and confident that Lebanon's refusal to accept them was a "complication" that would be overcome. The evictees, who Israel alleges are members of Muslim fundamentalist groups, have spent 16 nights in an ill-equipped tent camp stuck between Israeli and Lebanese lines. Neither country will allow humanitarian aid through its territory, each insisting the evictees are the other's problem. The United Nations Security

Council condemned Israel for the expulsions and demanded it take them back.

"I am completely at peace with the decision to temporarily remove over 400 political and organizational leaders and inciters of Hamas (the Islamic Resistance Movement)," Mr. Rabin told army radio. "I am convinced it was the right decision."

Ten of the evictees who Israel said were exiled by mistake waited impatiently Saturday for a Red Cross representative to arrive at the camp and arrange their return. But Lebanon has prevented the International Committee of the Red Cross's chief delegate to Lebanon, Bernard Pfefferle, from entering the camp for two days. The Israeli army said the 10 could return to the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip through one of three crossings into its self-declared "security zone" in South Lebanon. This would require passing through Lebanese-held territory and Lebanon's official sources said they would not allow it. The evictees have insisted on returning through the Zmraya crossing from where they were expelled, just two kilometres south of their camp. Zmraya was not among the three crossing named by Israel.

All but a 16-year-old youth will

(Continued from page 2)

## Shipping, transport sector lost \$547 million

By P.V. Vivekanand  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan has suffered a loss of at least \$547 million in revenues from port and cargo handling as well as transport charges since the imposition of the international sanctions against Iraq in August 1990, according to a study conducted by the Jordanian Shipping Agents Association (JSAA).

The five-page study, whose calculations are based on 1989 figures, does not include invisible losses suffered by local businesses as a result of delays and cargo diversion ordered by the enforcers of the sanctions patrolling the Red Sea.

The study says that "transit imports" — the bulk of it for Iraq — passing through the port of Aqaba fell to 1.97 million tonnes in 1992 (excluding December figures) compared with 5.667 million tonnes in 1989 — a decline of 66.01 per cent.

The total decline in such imports since August 1990 is calculated at 10.75 million tonnes and based on an estimate that each tonne of cargo passing through Aqaba used to bring in JD 25 in revenues to the treasury, the loss was a total of JD 268.85 million (\$400 million); JD 59.375 million in the last five months of 1990, JD 115.95 million in 1991 and JD 93.525 million in the first 11 months of 1992.

"Transit imports" totalled less than 44,000 tonnes in November 1992, compared with 515,572 tonnes in November 1989 and 569,962 tonnes in May 1992. According to the study, "transit exports" through Aqaba totalled 1.151 million tonnes in 1989 — an average of 95,900 tonnes a month. The U.N.-imposed embargo against Iraq brought such exports — Iraqi dates, urea, sulphur etc. — to a complete standstill since August 1990.

Based on the same formula of JD 25-a-tonne, the study says that the Kingdom lost JD 67.2 million (\$100 million) as a result of the total halt to Iraqi exports through Aqaba; JD 12 million in the last five months of 1990, JD 28.5 million in 1991, and JD 26.4 million in the first 11 months of 1992.

(Continued on page 2)



Russian President Boris Yeltsin (right) welcomes U.S. President George Bush on arrival in Moscow Saturday (AFP photo)

# Bush, Yeltsin sign 'historic' arms reduction accord today

MOSCOW (Agencies) — President George Bush's foreign farewell tour took him Saturday from the depths of despair in Somalia to the heights of superpower summitry for the signing of what he called "the most historic arms control agreement ever made."

Russian President Boris Yeltsin greeted Mr. Bush with a handshake on the bitter cold day as a light snow swirled at Moscow's Sheremetyevo airport. They spoke briefly with each other before departing in a motorcade.

It was the fourth and final summit for Mr. Bush and Mr. Yeltsin, as well as Mr. Bush's 25th and likely last trip abroad.

Mr. Bush, arriving from Somalia where he viewed efforts by U.S. troops to feed a starving population (see page 2), was reunited in the Russian capital with his wife, Barbara. She arrived on a separate flight from the United States, along with James Baker, Mr. Bush's chief of staff.

When Mr. Baker was secretary of state for Mr. Bush, he carried out many of the negotiations that led to the landmark START II nuclear weapons reduction agreement.

Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger arrived in Moscow aboard a third flight.

Mr. Bush planned to stop in Paris for a chat with President Francois Mitterrand on his way back to Washington Sunday.

Mr. Mitterrand had been considering visiting Mr. Bush in Washington before President-elect Bill Clinton takes over Jan. 20, but "this just works out better to discuss issues such as Bosnia, Somalia and other areas where we're involved with the French," Bush spokesman Martin Fitzwater said in a statement issued from Air Force One en route to Moscow.

Mr. Yeltsin was honouring the Bushes at a state dinner at the Kremlin's Hall of Facets on Saturday night. On Sunday, Mr. Bush and Mr. Yeltsin will sign the treaty that slashes U.S. and Russian long-range nuclear arsenals by two-thirds over the next 10 years.

After U.S. and Russian negotiators finalised the document in Geneva on Tuesday, Mr. Yeltsin called START II the "document of the century" and the "most important achievement in relations between our two countries."

START-II, which supplements an earlier treaty signed by Mr. Bush and then-Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev in July 1991, sets a ceiling of 3,500 nuclear warheads on each side by 2003 at the latest — or the year 2000, if Russia's economy can manage it.

It eliminates about 15,000 of the combined 21,000 warheads in the Russian and U.S. arsenals and rolls back two decades of the superpower arms race.

Most significantly, it scraps the most destabilising weapons on both sides — land-based multiple-warhead missiles such as the Russian SS-18, an apocalyptic weapon capable of travelling 11,000 kilometres to strike the American mainland.

"It is brilliant news — that is how experts assess the meeting," Russian Television said, referring to the summit.

But the event otherwise aroused little excitement in Russian media, which were more concerned with new year festivities and economic hardship throughout the former Soviet Union.

The summit, switched to Moscow because of bad weather in the planned Black Sea venue of Sochi, caps diplomatic activity that culminated last Tuesday in deal on the treaty text.

Mr. Yeltsin is in need of a political boost after suffering a major defeat at the hands of his conservative parliament last month.

Forced to sacrifice radical acting Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar in December under pressure from the Congress of People's Deputies, Mr. Yeltsin has described 1992 as the most difficult year of his life. This year is likely to be just as tough.

Besides signing START-II, the two leaders will hold talks on bilateral and regional issues.

# Arafat implies peace talks to continue

PARIS (Agencies) — Palestinian negotiators will continue to participate in the Middle East peace talks, but only if Israel reverses the expulsion of 415 Palestinians, Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat said in a magazine interview.

Mr. Arafat was quoted as saying in this week's edition of the French magazine L'Express that the PLO would not heed calls by the fundamentalist Palestinian movement Hamas to quit the negotiations.

The PLO leader said that the Palestine National Council, which serves as the Palestinian parliament-in-exile and sets broad policy for the PLO, and the PLO's Executive Committee have democratically approved participation in the talks.

"I have no other choice but to oversee that application of this programme," which implies our engagement in the peace process. We're not going to go back on that," Mr. Arafat said in the interview from PLO headquarters in Tunis.

But Mr. Arafat demanded that Israel reverse the order expelling 415 Muslim fundamentalists allegedly linked to Hamas.

Lebanon has refused to accept the Palestinians, while Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin refused to take them back. They are braving freezing temperatures in Israel's self-styled "security zone" in southern Lebanon.

"How can we continue to address the Israeli delegates, participate in negotiations, as long as those expelled are not allowed to return?" Mr. Arafat was quoted as saying.

"Israel will have to take a step backwards if it wants to avoid torpedoing the peace process," he said.

The PLO leader denied that there were any fundamental differences separating his leadership in Tunis and the Palestinian negotiators from the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Rabin wants to meet Clinton

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said he wanted to hear U.S. President-elect Bill Clinton's views on Middle East peace before the next round of peace talks.

# Ghali to discuss Somalia force's future

ADDIS ABABA (Agencies) — U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali will argue his case for greater foreign military involvement in Somalia in talks Sunday with representatives of 19 countries with troops in the troubled country.

United Nations sources in Addis Ababa said Sunday's talks would precede a Somalia national reconciliation conference planned for Monday and Tuesday.

Dr. Ghali was due to arrive in the Ethiopian capital Saturday.

His meeting with the 19 envoys would focus on the future role of the U.N.-led multinational force in the Horn of Africa country shattered by civil war and famine, the sources said.

The key issues are how long the 35,000 foreign troops would stay in Somalia and whether they should disarm the warring factions as Boutros Ghali insists, the sources told Reuters.

"Apart from deciding on the time limit for the forces' stay in Somalia, Boutros Ghali is also expected to convince the countries which contributed troops to agree to his proposal to disarm warring factions if peace has to prevail in the troubled country," said one source, who declined to be identified.

The United States has so far declined to be involved in disarming warring Somalis, saying its military mission is to secure relief food for the starving from armed looters.

Political analysts say Dr. Ghali's anxiety was heightened by a U.S. plan to start withdrawing

some combat units of its 18,000-strong force as early as this month.

Somalia's two main warlords, Mohammad Farah Aideded and Ali Mahdi Mohammad, have been invited to attend Monday's reconciliation talks Dr. Ghali will host.

Mr. Ali Mahdi has confirmed he will attend. A close aide of Gen. Aideded said in Mogadishu the general was expected to tell the U.N. Saturday he will also participate.

At least 14 other factions which carved up Somalia into rival fiefdoms after the fall in January 1991 of President Mohammad Siad Barre have also been invited.

Fierce clan rivalry has prevented previous attempts to get all of Somalia's feuding factions to the conference table.

The multinational force has in the last month fanned out into Somalia's countryside to protect famine relief supplies in the U.N.-backed Operation Restore Hope.

Fighting and famine have killed at least 400,000 people and turned one in six Somalis into a refugee since Gen. Aideded and Mr. Ali Mahdi turned on each other after chasing out Mr. Siad Barre.

U.S. President George Bush departed Somalia at dawn Saturday after a two-day visit that boosted the morale of Somalis and U.S. troops — but that perhaps raised their hopes too high.

# Iraq: OPEC decisions are no longer binding

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq's oil minister said in remarks published Saturday that his country would reject Organisation of Petroleum Exporting (OPEC) decisions once its embargoed oil found its way to international markets.

"Iraq rejects OPEC decisions on prices, production ceilings and quotas," Usama Al Hiti told the government newspaper Al Jumhuriyah.

Before the Gulf crisis, Iraq was OPEC's second largest producer after Saudi Arabia, with an output quota of 3.1 million barrels per day. Sanctions imposed in response to its 1990 invasion of Kuwait have blocked exports.

The Security Council has linked lifting the ban to Iraqi compliance with Gulf war ceasefire resolutions including the elimination of its weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Hiti even hinted that Iraq might reconsider its membership of OPEC. "Iraq is reviewing its oil policies within OPEC in line with international developments and the growth of new international blocks."

Mr. Hiti said Iraq was reacting to "the failure of the organisation to embody the interests of producing countries and the ineffectiveness of its decisions."

The minister predicted last month that the oil producers' cartel would eventually collapse and that not all members would abide by their output agreement. OPEC agreed in its latest meeting to cut total production in the

next quarter to 24.9 barrels per day.

Interest rates raised

The Central Bank of Iraq has raised interest rates by between one and five per cent to draw excess money from circulation and support the dinar, Baghdad newspapers said Saturday.

The new rates, effective from Jan. 1, 1993, are part of a government package meant to fight rampant inflation.

No official figures are available on inflation but the prices of some essential commodities have surged almost 100-fold since the United Nations imposed sanctions.

Interest on six-month deposits has jumped to 11 per cent from nine and on long-term deposits to 12 per cent from 10.

The central bank now offers 15 per cent interest on two-year fixed deposits. Previously the highest possible rate for any deposit was 10 per cent.

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## Kabul decides to form parliament, regular army

ISLAMABAD (R) — An assembly of national delegates in Afghanistan has approved the creation of a parliament, set up a regular army and ordered television and radio to conform to Islamic principles, state-run Kabul Radio said.

The Hal-o-Aqad assembly, which met Friday under the chairmanship of Chief Justice Maulvi Mohammad Shah Fazeli, approved a parliament formed from among 20 per cent of its 1,335 members elected from across Afghanistan, said the radio monitored in Islamabad Saturday.

The Hal-o-Aqad Wednesday elected Interim President Burhanuddin Rabbani as head of state for the next two years in a move attacked by several of the nine Mujahadeen leaders who make up the fractious leadership council.

The leadership council was set up to fill the political vacuum after the former communist government collapsed last April. Five out of the nine parties boycotted the Hal-o-Aqad, accusing Mr. Rabbani of influencing the delegates.

The Hal-o-Aqad decided to establish a regular army, which should be set up "mostly from the Mujahadeen groups," the radio said. It gave no details.

Various factions control the different regions of Afghanistan, and Kabul is divided into a patchwork of zones of control where rival Mujahadeen fighters clash

regularly.

The assembly ordered that all employees of the eight-month-old Islamic coalition government should be Muslim and demanded that all television and radio programmes be made in accordance with Islamic law.

Women have already been banned from reading the news on television.

The radio said no non-Muslim organisations would be allowed to run activities in the country.

Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, leader of the fundamentalist Hezb-i-Islami party, said this week he would regard the opening of the assembly as a declaration of war.

However Kabul radio said Mr. Rabbani had received assurances of support Friday from Yousuf Khalis, leader of a breakaway faction of Hezb-i-Islami.

Mr. Khalis had earlier refused to accept Mr. Rabbani's election saying it was against the wishes of the nation and the preaching of Islam.

Mr. Rabbani also met a group of army generals led by General Momin who represented General Rasheed Dostum, head of the former communist militia, the radio said.

"On behalf of the generals, General Momin congratulated Rabbani and promised to work within the Afghan army, cooperate with other forces in the country and obey the orders of the Defence Ministry and Rabbani himself," the radio said.

## Five gendarmes slain in arms heist in Algeria

ALGIERS (AP) — Bandits cut the throats of five gendarmes and killed them in a bloody attack on a police station to steal weapons, a newspaper reported Saturday.

The daily newspaper Al Watan did not identify the bandits, but suspicion fell on the armed Islamic groups that have killed more than 250 police officers and soldiers in the past year.

The attack Friday at Laghouat, 400 kilometres south of Algiers, ranks among the bloodiest in the Muslim fundamentalist campaign to destabilise country.

Al Watan, which has a good reputation for accuracy, reported that the five gendarmes apparently surprised by the assailants, who made off with four machine-pistols and an assault rifle.

The information was not immediately confirmed by officials. As is their custom, the Islamic groups made no claim of responsibility.

The Islamic bands have waged a deadly underground campaign against the state since a military coup a year ago that blocked the Islamic Salvation Front from winning parliamentary elections.

Defence lawyers meanwhile walked out Friday of the military trial of 71 soldiers accused of conspiring with the fundamentalists to topple the government, a crime that carries the death penalty.

The 13 civilian lawyers claimed that the tribunal was prejudiced was committing "flagrant violations" of civil rights.



An American Marine buys bananas from a passing vendor in central Mogadishu (AFP photo)

## Bush bids emotional farewell to U.S. troops in Somalia

MOGADISHU (R) — President George Bush made a New Year's Day visit on Friday to a Somali orphanage where laughter has replaced the silence of death and bade an emotional farewell to U.S. troops before he leaves the White House.

Mr. Bush thanked U.S. troops for their relief efforts in Somalia but he warned that he and President-elect Bill Clinton agreed America should not act as the world's watchdog.

Asked by a young U.S. Marine if the United States would take similar action in the future, Mr. Bush shook his head.

"I would have to say to you it would be a special case because of the enormity of it," he said. Speaking of Somalia, he referred to "the enormity of the starvation and the destruction and the violence."

The American response to the plight of Somalia does not mean Americans will go every time somebody is hurting, he said. "We simply can't do that. We don't have the money."

During the unusual question-and-answer session with U.S. Marines in Baidoa, which had been called the "city of death" before Americans arrived to safeguard relief supplies, Bush was more publicly candid than usual.

"This one is a new one. It's a humanitarian mission...and I think you've done a superb job," Mr. Bush, wearing a desert camouflage cap and tunic, earlier

told 1,500 cheering U.S. and other foreign troops in the heat at Mogadishu airport.

The brief address, Mr. Bush's last set-piece appearance on his two-day visit to the forces he sent to Somalia, was a swansong as commander-in-chief of the U.S. military before Mr. Clinton takes over on Jan. 20.

Mr. Bush spent a second night on the assault ship USS Tripoli before flying early Saturday to Moscow to sign a treaty with Russian President Boris Yeltsin that slashes their countries' long-range nuclear arsenals.

U.S. and French troops thrust into Baidoa, the "city of death" at the epicentre of Somalia's famine, on Dec. 16 one week after the first U.S. Marines poured ashore in Mogadishu to launch the multinational military relief effort.

Waving Somalis in rags lined the decrepit streets from Baidoa airfield chanting "President Bush, President Bush" on Friday as Mr. Bush passed in a light armoured vehicle on his way to an orphanage for 725 victims of Somalia's war and hunger.

Children, brought back to life from the brink of starvation, gave Mr. Bush a garland of purple bougainvillea flowers and welcomed him with songs for his 30-minute tour of the simple concrete compound.

"Welcome President Bush at Baidoa orphanage" centre and a happy New Year," said a hand-

made banner at the entrance.

The death rate at the orphanage was fallen to about one child a week from more than 10 a day in September.

But Mr. Bush saw the scourge of a famine that has killed 300,000 Somalis when he visited an intensive-care room off the main yard where about one dozen children, some with shrivelled legs and listless eyes, sat on the floor being helped to eat.

"It's very emotional, I don't know how to respond," said Mr. Bush, a devoted grandfather.

Mr. Bush, who sent more than 100,000 U.S. troops to fight in the 1991 Gulf war against Iraq, has committed up to 25,000 servicemen and women to the operation in Somalia.

Mr. Clinton had "been very supportive of my decision," and "I would see no way that he would precipitously end what is essentially this beautiful mission," he said.

"I think he shares my view that the United States cannot do all things," he added.

Mr. Bush vented his ire on Iraq's President Saddam Hussein, his long-time foe. "He's a madman who brutalises people," he told a Marine.

White House aides acknowledged that Mr. Bush feels frustration with the fact that President Saddam will remain in power after the president leaves office.

## U.S. military personnel leave Yemen

BAHRAIN (AP) — The U.S. military has dropped Yemen as a support base for Operation Restore Hope amid fears of rising Islamic fundamentalism in the country where bomb explosions killed an Austrian tourist and a hotel janitor this week.

A U.S. Navy spokesman confirmed Saturday that all military personnel who had been based in Aden to provide logistical and technical support for the relief operation in Somalia had been withdrawn for security considerations.

Explosions on Tuesday rocked the Gold Mohur and Aden hotels, the only two five-star facilities in Aden, the capital of the former Marxist South Yemen which merged with North Yemen in 1990.

In addition to the two people killed, four Austrian tourists were wounded in the first blast at the Gold Mohur, which was frequented at American servicemen.

The second blast in the parking lot of the Aden Hotel, wounded two men as they were rigging a bomb and a security man who apparently was walking towards their car. Interior Ministry officials have said.

A third bomb was found and defused at a hotel in which one of the wounded suspects was staying. No Americans were hurt in the

blasts, which the Interior Ministry blamed on "hiredlings" working for a foreign party that was seeking to destabilise Yemen.

The Yemeni officials and diplomats privately said the blasts were the works of Muslim extremists disenchanted with Western-style decorations, partying and alcohol consumption at the big hotels during the festive season.

Yemen has been plagued by political assassinations and bomb explosions blamed on anti-morger activists. But officials and diplomats said this week's attacks may have been carried out by fundamentalists to spotlight opposition to the U.S. military presence.

Muslim fundamentalists across the Middle East have denounced Operation Restore Hope as a U.S. attempt to control the western gateway to the oil-rich Gulf after last year's war against Iraq had provided it with a foothold in several Gulf countries.

Islamic fundamentalism is a threat the Americans would not want to take lightly. While on a peacekeeping mission in Lebanon, 241 American servicemen were killed when a suicide truck-bomber belonging to a pro-Iranian group blasted their Beirut headquarters on Oct. 23, 1983.

Yemeni officials contacted in Aden on Friday said that within a few hours of the blasts, two U.S. military transport planes had evacuated all of the estimated 100 U.S. personnel and their gear from Aden.

Petty Officer Kevin Stephens, spokesman for the U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, said he knew of the evacuation, but could not confirm the number of personnel who had been based in Aden.

He also declined to say where the forces were evacuated to. But Djibouti and Kenya's Mombasa are the closest and most convenient ports that could serve as alternative stopover points. Aden, with a key oil refinery, had served mainly as a logistics and refuelling base for these forces.

Contacted aboard the USS Lassa in the Gulf, Mr. Stephens said the evacuation was ordered "because of concern about the security situation, the instability" in Yemen.

The USS Tripoli amphibious task force was diverted to Somalia at the same time. The force comprises four ships, a cruiser and several contract vessels.

Yemen was quick to offer air and sea facilities to the Americans in an effort to end the political isolation from which it had suffered since siding with Iraq during the 1990-1991 Gulf crisis.

## Qadhafi hints at technical problem in crash

TUNIS (R) — Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi has said navigational problems may have caused the crash of a Libyan Arab Airlines plane in which 150 people were killed on Dec. 22.

In a speech broadcast by Libyan radio on Friday night, Colonel Qadhafi said investigators were now considering whether the crash "was the result of an error in navigation, in the control tower (or due to) a shortage of spare parts."

He said technical problems may have made it impossible for the crew to estimate distance, height and speed.

"All that could be the result of a shortage in spare parts embargoed for the Libyan airports and planes," he added.

Col. Qadhafi said investigators were also looking into possible sabotage by Western intelligence "in reply to Lockerbie" or by the Irish Republican Army (IRA) which Libya once supported but has now abandoned.

Britain and the United States

have accused three Libyans of blowing up a Pan Am plane over the Scottish town of Lockerbie in December 1988.

The Western states persuaded the United Nations to impose limited sanctions, including a ban on spare parts for planes, last April because Tripoli refused to hand the suspects over.

Col. Qadhafi did not mention reports that the Boeing 727, on a domestic flight from the eastern city of Benghazi, crashed after a mid-air collision with a Libyan military plane, presumably because of a navigation error when approaching Tripoli's airport.

An official Libyan newspaper Saturday urged Libyans to resume supporting the IRA and charged that Britain is terrorising Libya.

"Britain has adopted terrorism Libya after the United States gave up terrorism to solve America's own internal problems," wrote the daily Al Jahshiriya. Its editorial was distributed by Libya's government news agency

JANA, which was monitored in Cairo.

"This British behaviour comes after Libya handed over (to Britain) all its information on the IRA, something which harmed this just cause," the newspaper said. "Therefore, the Libyan people are called upon to reconsider the question of supporting the IRA, even if only by making donations to this just cause."

Libya said it stopped supporting the IRA last year. The government delivered to Britain information it had about the IRA in line with Libya's renunciation of terrorism as part of an effort to resolve its crisis with the West.

Al Jahshiriya said that the IRA "is striving to liberate its country from foreign occupation... if Britain had left Ireland alone, there would have been no victims at all. But British occupation and terrorism continue because Britain does not want to liberate Ireland. This necessarily led to acts of resistance."

## Standoff continues over evictees

(Continued from page 1)

go straight to jail if they return. Mr. Pfefferle, of the ICRC said the humanitarian organisation was awaiting word from Israel on what will happen to the 10 men once they returned home.

He said that the Red Cross policy for repatriation requires a face-to-face meeting with every prisoner, deportee or detainee prior to their transportation.

"The ICRC is in constant contact with the governments of Israel and Lebanon seeking permission to visit" the evictees, Mr. Pfefferle said from his office in the eastern Bekaa Valley town of Kasra.

The commander of Israel's surrogate militia, meanwhile, said that he was against the expulsion on "political and humanitarian grounds."

It was the first time that Antoine Lahd had outlined his position on the mass expulsion by Israel, the financier, trainer and arms supplier of his 3,000-strong South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia.

"In Lebanon we have enough Palestinians and we should see to it that their number is not increased," he told a news conference in Marjayoun.

There are more than 400,000 Palestinians living in Lebanon, most of them in 13 refugee camps in the southern, eastern and northern areas of the country. General Lahd said Lebanon

was chosen by Israel as the destination for the evictees "because it is the weakest among the Arab countries bordering Israel."

He said he did not expect the evictees to join Iranian-backed Shiite Muslim fundamentalists of Hizbollah in attacks on the "security zone."

Dr. Rantisi said eight evictees sneaked into a nearby Lebanese village controlled by Hizbollah during the night.

They returned on donkeys early Saturday carrying with them flour, dates, tinned vegetables and chick peas to the makeshift camp.

Dr. Rantisi said they also brought back a calf, which the Palestinians later slaughtered for their next meals.

The Palestinians have been living on dwindling food and medical supplies after the Lebanese army, seeking to force Israel to take them back, barred all humanitarian aid from reaching them 10 days ago.

Sympathetic villagers in Lebanon have smuggled some food to the men.

U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali said in Cairo he would receive a report from U.N. envoy James Jonah on the plight of the 415 Palestinians.

Mr. Jonah also failed to persuade Israel and Lebanon to allow the supplies for the Palestinians to pass through their territories.

## Shipping losses

(Continued from page 1)

About 70 per cent of all cargo handling activities at Aqaba were related to Iraq prior to the Gulf crisis since Iraq's own ports in the Gulf were blocked during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war.

Direct losses resulting from cargo accessibility conditions imposed by the embargo were estimated at \$23 million in 1991 and \$20 million in 1992. The loss from the denial of total cargo space was estimated at the rate of \$500 per 20-foot container and \$1,000 per 40-foot container originating in Europe and \$300 per 20-foot container and \$600 per 40-foot container originating in the Far East.

The "accessibility" conditions set by the sanction enforces requires space in the cargo hold. As a result, shippers are unable to use the vessels at full capacity.

The ISAA said eight ships were searched and forced to discharge cargo at other regional ports in the first six months of 1992. Consequent rerouting charges and extra freight were \$4 million.

The last interception was of the Norwegian Jargon Vesta which was carrying 3,000 tonnes of British foodstuffs to the Jordanian market. The ship was intercepted and boarded at the Tiran Straits at the mouth of the Gulf of Aqaba on Dec. 26.

## Discussion of disarmament haunts Somalia

By Tina Susman  
The Associated Press

MOGADISHU, — Disarmament and what it might mean — is a subject with no easy answer — is on everyone's lips as relief workers, U.S. troops and Somalis argue its merits.

To Gemmo Lodesani, deputy director of operations for the U.N. World Food Programme (WFP), lack of disarmament means dodging Mogadishu's killers, thieves and hijackers unless he pays for the protection of armed Somali guards.

To many Somalis, it means stashing guns under car seats or in closets and watching the gun prices plummet as sovereign troops consider eliminating the rule of the freelance gun.

To the U.S.-led military coalition trying to make the country safe for famine relief work, it means seizing the gun-mounted pickups — known as technicals — and all other weapons that stand in their way.

On Tuesday, the coalition flooded Mogadishu with leaflets warning that heavily-armed vehicles, automatic rifles, machine guns and mortars "will not be tolerated." It said anyone pointing a gun at a member of the force "will be shot."

"Our goal is to get the gunmen off the streets and get the technic-

als off the streets. In areas we control, any open display of weapons we'll treat as hostile," U.S. Marine Colonel Fred Peck told reporters Monday.

But there are exceptions. A Marine convoy heading to Mogadishu from Baidoa, 190 kilometres west, this week passed several technicals along the highway and did not stop them. Col. Peck said it would have slowed the convoy too much to seize every technical spotted.

At the same time in the capital, Marines were seizing vehicles with empty gun mounts. Col. Peck said unarmed technicals are targets because they can easily be converted back into lethal weapons.

Since the start of Operation Restore Hope on Dec. 9 U.S. officials have acknowledged the futility of trying to demilitarise a country steeped in guns with neither police nor a government.

U.S. special envoy Robert Oakley called disarmament "naïve," and General Robert Johnston, commander of the U.S. forces in Somalia, suggested some well-disciplined militias could be integrated into a regular security force.

The military says the policy from the start has been to secure famine relief areas, not to act as a police force or to remove every weapon.



A U.S. Marine patrols as Somalis wait in line for jobs in Mogadishu (AFP photo)

Relief agencies say there is no question the foreign military presence has enhanced their ability to distribute food, but the problem of protecting Somalia once the visible weapons are seized is being dodged.

They also complain that aid workers themselves are more vulnerable to attack because they can no longer travel with AK-47s poking out their car windows.

"I'm scared now — more scared than before," said Mr.

Lodesani, who was ambushed by two men firing automatic weapons Sunday night as he drove unarmed away from his office.

Mr. Lodesani scrambled out of the Land Cruiser and fled into a nearby tea shop, where he was confronted by a man with a long knife who stole his watch and wallet as the gunmen drove off in his car.

"Somebody's got to confront the issue," said Cynthia Oster-

man, a spokeswoman for Care international. "If guns are under the floorboards, in the closet, and under the seats, the risk remains this place will fall back into anarchy."

Like most aid agencies, Care stopped travelling with armed guards after the Marines' arrival and quickly lost a vehicle to armed hijackers. On Monday, another Care vehicle was hijacked and a Somali guard inside was shot dead.

## JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 723111-19	
PROGRAMME TWO	
17:30	Reves d'enfants
17:40	La Plac de Napatan
19:00	News, French
19:15	Le Journal de l'histoire
19:30	News in Hebrew
19:45	News in Arabic
20:30	Family Matters
21:10	National Geographic
22:00	News in English
22:20	News in Arabic
Mini Series: "Who Killed Sir Harry Oakley?"	
PRAYER TIMES	
05:08	Fajr
12:30	(Sunrise) Dhuha
14:30	Dhuhr
14:22	'Asr
16:40	Maghreb
18:00	Isha
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swifich Tel. 810740	
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 637285	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440	
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757	
Terra Nova Church Tel. 622366	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541	
Anglican Church Tel. 60851, Tel. 628543	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261	
Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 771751	
Armenian International Church Tel. 685326	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Tel. 523824, 654932	
Church of the Nazarene Tel. 675691	
WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology	
It will be partly cloudy and there will be a chance for scattered showers of rain in the northern parts of Jordan. Winds will be light and variable. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and sea calm.	
USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Mohammad Al Swai	776149
Dr. Abbas Al Hakim	885680
Dr. Mohammad Al Nabawi	693925
Dr. Khalil Moudi	743500
First pharmacy	661912
Ferdows pharmacy	778336
Al Asema pharmacy	637055
Natroukh pharmacy	623672
Al Salam pharmacy	621366
Yasoub pharmacy	626730
IBRADE	644945
Samicani pharmacy	637660
Najib pharmacy	847623
Fifth circle pharmacy	813141
Samin pharmacy	661896
Talal pharmacy	621366
Ya'ish pharmacy	624425
Al Ataz pharmacy	777112
Al Azoumi pharmacy	886681
IBRADE	771957
Dr. Ali Al Saman	244023
Alquds pharmacy	(—)
ZARQA:	
Dr. Zayed Hawatmeh	993367
Khalil pharmacy	985417
EMERGENCIES	
Food Control Centre	637111
Civil Defence Department	661111
Civil Defence Immediate	630341
Rescue	199
Civil Defence Emergency	192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade	891228
Blood Bank	775121
Highway Police	943402
Traffic Police	996390
Public Security Department	630321
Hotel Complaints	608800
Price Complaints	661176
Water and Sewerage	697467
Complaints	787111
Telephone Information	121
Overseas Calls	010230
Central Amman Telephone	623101
Repairs	661101
Abdali Telephone Repairs	721111
Jordan Television	723111
Radio Jordan	774111
Water Authority	680100

Yesterday's high temperatures
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## Baath Party to appeal for legalisation

By Mariam M. Shahin  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Baath Arab Socialist Party (BASP) has appealed against the Ministry of Interior's decision to deny the group legal status. They have taken their case to the Higher Court of Justice and should have an answer within two months, said the party leader Ahmad Najdawi Saturday.

BASP is the second of three parties to be denied legal status in Jordan. The two others, the Jordanian Communist Party and the Jordan People's Democratic Party (JPDP) have already appealed the Ministry's decision. Mr. Najdawi told the Jordan Times that the Minister of Interior Jawdat Al Shoul, will be informed by the Higher Court of Justice that the appeal was made and he will then have two weeks to study the petition. The court has six weeks to hold a hearing and make its decision. According to Mr. Najdawi, "the party has a good chance of becoming legal

because the justice system is fair."

The Communist Party and the JPDP, both leftist party's much like the BASP, filed an appeal within one week of the ministry's decision.

Asked why the BASP waited three weeks to appeal the Ministry of Interior's decision, Mr. Najdawi said he hoped that the minister would reconsider his decision and avoid the hassles of a court hearing. "I hoped he would change his adamant attitude," said Mr. Najdawi.

Five of the eleven parties that have sought legal status have so far been legalised and three have been denied legitimacy.

The twelfth group, the Unionist Arab Democratic Party (UADP) is expected to apply for party status early this week. The parties that have been legalised so far are, the Jordan National Alliance, the Popular Union Party, Al Abd Party, the Islamic Action Front and the Al Mustakbal Party.

## Icelandic minister expected in Amman

By Elia Nasrallah  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Iceland's Minister of Communications Halldor Blondal will be arriving in Amman on January 6 at the head of a delegation for a formal visit at the invitation of Minister of Tourism Yusef Hekmat.

Mr. Blondal, who is expected to discuss tourism along with other matters with Jordanian government officials during the four-day visit, according to the Ministry of Tourism.

Ministry Secretary General Nami Atallah told the Jordan Times that the question of tariffs for travel between the two countries will be one of the main topics on the agenda. At present, no direct flights exist between Iceland and Jordan and travellers have to arrange for their trips between the two countries through a third country, said Mr. Atallah. A potential agreement between Royal Jordanian (RJ) and Iceland Air is expected during the visit, according to Mr. Atallah, who said that this will boost tourism and cultural exchanges between the two countries.

According to the Icelandic consul in Jordan, Mr. Blondal will be accompanied on the visit here by his wife, the vice president of Iceland Air, the director of tourism, the secretary general of the ministry of communications and other assistants. The meetings will cover tourism and travel as well as cultural matters, said the Consul Stefania Khalifa, who added that Jordan established diplomatic ties with Iceland in 1990 and is the only country in the Middle East with diplomatic ties with Iceland.

Mrs. Khalifa said that the establishment of relations followed a visit to Iceland by His Majesty King Hussein in 1989. She said that the president of Iceland has received invitations from the King and His Royal Highness Prince Faisal to visit Jordan and the visit could take place any time during his present term in office.

According to Mr. Atallah, tourists from Iceland and the other Scandinavian countries declined this year due to the economic recession affecting Europe. But he hoped that tourist groups will resume their trips to Jordan in the coming year.

## Regulations to be enforced in construction sector

AMMAN (Petra) — The Greater Amman Municipality and the Jordan Engineering Association (JEA) Saturday announced an agreement on measures to be followed in the construction sector designed to prevent violations of the building codes.

The new instructions which concern concrete work, should be applied in all projects regardless of their volume and area. Under the new regulations, the engineering office which supervises the construction work is to be held responsible for implementing the regulations on the site of the project while the Amman municipality's task will be confined to technical supervision.

A permit for concrete work will be issued in two stages, one while laying the foundations of the building and the other, at the end of the project.

A joint statement issued by the two bodies said that more than one permit for concrete laying could be issued if the projects are big and consist of different sections. Furthermore, the statement said, violators will risk having buildings pulled down.

Should the municipality find buildings to have been erected without licences and permits concerning concrete, the JEA will be alerted. It said that the JEA can later follow up on such violation and take the proper actions.

## Tawjihi exams begin

AMMAN (J.T.) — A total of 73,342 students will Sunday sit for the first session of the Tawjihi examination as prepared by the Ministry of Education for public and private schools in Jordan.

Ministry sources said that 975 halls have been prepared for the examination session which will last until January 14. The ministry said that marking papers and assessing the results of the examinations will begin immediately after each session and results should appear before the end of February.

Normally, the results of the first term are added to those of the second term held in May each year.

The number of students taking the literary topics is 38,833, scientific topics 21,235, commercial 5,594, agricultural 2,680, industrial 3,405, nursing 1,293 and hotel management subjects 220.

The ministry called on students to strictly abide by the given regulations and instructions concerning the examinations procedures.

## WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

### EXHIBITIONS

\* Caricature exhibition by cartoonist Naji Al Ali at the Abdal Hameed Shoman Art Gallery.

### FILM

\* Film entitled "Dirty Harry", at the American Centre — 5 p.m.



PREMIER MEETS EX-ALGERIAN PRESIDENT: Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker received at the Prime Ministry Saturday former Algerian President Ahmad Ben Bella who is on a private visit to Jordan. The meeting reviewed the situation in the Arab World and the latest developments in the Middle East region.

## Irbid radio goes on air

IRBID (J.T.) — Local radio station went on the air Friday with broadcasts covering local affairs and issues of common concern to the public.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, commenting on the start of the broadcasts, urged the radio station to serve as a platform for people to express their views concerning public matters, and also to give officials the chance to reply to complaints.

The new station in Irbid ought to allocate time for discussion of development projects in the Irbid Governorate, he said. He added that the new radio station would reflect the real concerns and official views of the public and the officials alike.

Information Minister Mahmoud Al Sharif said in a statement that the Irbid station was one of a series of stations to be opened in the various governorates.

The FM 105 Megahertz station covers the vicinity of the Irbid city and its suburbs, a radius of 30 kilometres, from eight until ten in the morning, and from one until two in the afternoon on a daily basis. The Irbid station, which has been staffed by officials and broadcasters from Amman radio station is located at the Public Security Department in Irbid.

Topics covered by the station range from traffic and road conditions to sports youth affairs and music.

## University professor urges Arabs to reject violence

AMMAN (J.T.) — A prominent Egyptian university professor and former minister of information has urged Islamic movements of the Arab World to abandon the path of violence and embark on a new course of action to achieve their goal.

Dr. Ahmad Kamal Abul Majid, a Cairo University professor said that no one can listen to the Muslims if they only demolish or destroy. "The hands that do not plant food or manufacture goods would never represent a pioneering work," he said in a lecture entitled "Towards a new Islamic trend," delivered at the Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation in Amman.

Dr. Abul Majid said that the Islamic movements should give attention to the future of the Islamic community and therefore should avert any destruction methods which were adopted in the pre-Islamic era of Arab history.

Dr. Abul Majid demanded that Arab governments punish those who violate the law and he called on all factions within the Islamic community to seek negotiation and dialogue rather than confrontation.

He also called for expanding the base of government so as to dilute the pressure of opposition.

The Egyptian professor also urged Muslims to base man-woman relationship on affection because, he said, it is a sacred relationship. "In many of our Arab countries the women are banned from going out and are subjected to numerous constraints in the name of Islam," he said. "Such behaviour is totally conflicting with the teachings of Islam," he added.

Why should many Muslims feel ashamed to call their wives by their names at a time when they realise that the Prophet Mohammad used to call his wives by their names?" asked the professor. "As a mother, and partner, a woman should never be prevented from going out to work," Dr. Abul Majid added.

Dr. Abul Majid said that the Arab and Islamic mentality is in need of a surgery. He said that even the Friday sermon, which is marked by shouting, rather than preaching ought to be changed, and Muslims have to have a new outlook to the modern world.

## House to debate draft budget for 1993

Finance committee focuses attention on alleged mishandling of funds

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Lower House of Parliament will Sunday debate the fiscal budget for 1993 and will hear accusations from the Financial Committee accusing a number of ministers of misappropriating public funds.

A report to be reviewed by the Lower House in Sunday's session stated that a number of cabinet ministers are dispensing with public funds with which they had been entrusted in a manner that would serve their election purposes. Most of these ministers are also Parliament members.

The report which was quoted Saturday by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, called for immediate examination into these cases which it described as a "dangerous phenomenon."

The committee's report contained a number of points related to inefficiencies in public administration work in Jordan. The committee said that it had noticed varying degrees of negligence and administrative malpractices in government offices' long winded procedures, the shortage of skilled staff, tight centralisation, and favouritism were said to be behind the malpractices. The committee said that many offices have failed to put the right person in the right position.

Other aspects of the report included a recommendation that the government ought to raise by JD 20 a month the salaries of the armed and security forces, as well as the civil servants. It also called for the improvement of living conditions and extra payments to retired officers and civil servants. The financial committee has also

completed its examination of the fiscal budget draft which was presented to the House by Finance Minister Basel Jardaneh last month. Mr. Jardaneh's report outlined the government's economic and financial performance in the past year and showed that the government has succeeded in covering current expenditure with domestic revenue for the first time in Jordan's history.

Earlier the House's judiciary committee under the chairmanship of Saleem Al Zoubi who said that the committee endorsed a draft amendment to the telecommunications law. The committee also studied and recommended to the House the endorsement of the draft law on the general farmers federation.

In a separate development, the Upper House of Parliament held

a session Saturday in which it referred a number of draft laws to various committees. Meeting under the chairmanship of Deputy Speaker Bahjat Talhouni the House referred to the finance committee a draft agreement between Jordan and China on economic and technical cooperation, and it referred to its judiciary committee a draft law on the Sahab municipality court, a draft law on the Ruseifa municipality court, a draft law on the state security court, a draft law on press and publications and a draft law on civil defence.

The senate's meeting was attended by Deputy Premier and Minister of Education Thouqan Hindawi and cabinet members. Mr. Talhouni was sitting in for speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi who is reported to be ill.

## British, Jordanian MPs meet

AMMAN (Petra) — Two British members of parliament discussed Middle East issues with Jordanian Parliament members Saturday and expressed an understanding of the Jordanian position and the country's important role towards re-establishing stability and peace in the region.

The two members of the House of Commons Robert Adley and John Rathbone first met with the Chairman of the Lower House of Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee Taher Al Masri who urged Britain to exercise pressure on Israel to respect U.N. Security Council resolutions in general and to implement Resolution 799 which orders Israel to repatriate the 400 Palestinian evictees.

Mr. Masri called on Europe and Britain to take into consideration their historic ties and common interests with the Arab World and help ensure the establishment of peace in the region. The two British MPs later called on Ahmad Obeidat, member of the Upper House of Parliament and Senate members to discuss the situation in the region and developments in the Palestine problem.

Mr. Obeidat described Israel's deportation of the 400 Palestinians to Lebanon as serving a deadly blow to the whole peace process. He urged Europe to force Israel to implement Security Council resolutions to ensure peace in the Middle East.

The British MPs voiced their hope that continued Euro-Arab dialogue will lead to further European understanding of the Arab causes and would help establish the aspired peace.

The two British parliamentarians who arrived in Amman before noon Saturday on a several day visit to Jordan are expected to discuss with government officials issues of common concern to Britain and Jordan as well as visiting touristic sites.

## Petra news agency plans work stoppage for more pay

By Elia Nasrallah  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Employees and correspondents employed by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, are planning a six hour work stoppage Sunday to support their demand for a raise of 30 per cent overtime payment on their salaries, similar to an allowance recently granted to the employees of radio and television services.

A Petra employee said that work stoppage will be from ten in the morning until four in the afternoon as a show of protest to the government against excluding Petra employees from the 30 per cent allowance.

Petra Director Khaled Mahadin said that he was optimistic that the government would grant the same allowance to the Petra employees who carry out similar work in news reporting. He said Petra staff start work much earlier and end much later than their broadcasting colleagues at the television station and much of their work is conducted outside the office. Mr. Mahadin said there are indications that the government would respond to the Petra staff demands.

He said that the stoppage is not a strike but will hopefully gain the



Khaled Mahadin

government's attention to Petra employees needs. He added that he has also urged his staff to double their efforts and prove their stand by improving the performance.

The work stoppage followed an emergency meeting by the Jordan Press Association (JPA) which groups Petra employees as members. The JPA board demanded that the government respond favourably to the Petra staff demands and for the allowance.

Minister of State for Prime Ministry Affairs Ibrahim Izzeddin

was reported to have called the JPA board during the emergency meeting assuring them that the government was concerned about the demand and would discuss and endorse the allowance at its regular sessions. However, the JPA board urged Petra staff to carry on the work stoppage to support their demand and urge the government to speed up its decision.

Information Minister Mahmoud Al Sharif, on the other hand, said that the employees of radio and television stations carry out work considered more difficult than that carried out by the Petra staff, especially during severe weather conditions. The minister said that the Petra staff should submit a request to the government for a raise and the government will examine their case in due time.

Petra staff members told the Jordan Times that the Cabinet was due to discuss their request at its regular sessions either Saturday or Tuesday evening. They said that the decision to stop work for six hours was almost unanimous, although a number of the staff described the decision as a bit hasty, and called for more time for the government to examine the situation.

## ICA holds annual celebration

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Industry and Trade Abdullah Ensour attended last week at Sahab Industrial City the annual celebration of the Industrial Commercial and Agricultural Company (ICA) and the reopening of a detergents factory.

Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Company Mohammad Abu Hassan delivered an address in which he said the detergents factory produced 17,000 tonnes of detergent in

1992 compared to 7,000 tonnes in 1989. Production capacity is expected to rise to 30,000 in 1993, he said.

ICA includes seven factories manufacturing detergents, soap, perfumes, food supplies, paints and pastes.

Mr. Abu Hassan said the company's exports to Arab and foreign markets have risen from about JD 1.9 million in 1989 to JD 11 million in 1991. In 1992, the

company's exports have reached about JD 13 million, he said.

ICA has also contributed to organising several industrial fairs in cooperation with the Jordanian Exports Development and Commercial Centres Corporation, the Jordanian Exporters Society and the Amman Chamber of Industry, he said. He added that the company will become the largest manufacturer of detergents in the Arab World after the conclusion of a new project in 1993.

## Thousands gather in support of evictees

AMMAN (J.T.) — Thousands of people gathered in and around the Roman amphitheatre in downtown Amman Friday to attend a public rally organised to show solidarity with the 415 Palestinians who were expelled from their homes in the occupied territories to south Lebanon more than two weeks ago.

The Lower House of Parliament member Mansour Seifeddin Murad delivered a speech at the rally warning against the Israeli measure. He said that it proves beyond doubt that Israel wants to expel Palestinians to create more room for new immigrants.

"Despite all of this, our (Arab) governments and leaderships are still talking about peace, while the enemy is still occupying our land, and evicting our people and preparing its troops for new fights," he said. The deputy criticised Arab governments for their continued compromises in the peace process despite the fact that such compromises affect Arab national interests. "They offer compromises after compromises, recognise the enemy, accept opening their markets and accept all its demands although these compromises harm our Arab sovereignty and interests," he said.

Deputy Murad went on to call for mobilising masses in Jordan, Palestine, the Arab world and the Islamic countries to be able to confront "the camp of infidelity represented in the main enemy of American imperialism, the Zionist entity and the international Zionist movement." He said that these forces were planning to decimate the Arab nation and steal its fortunes and he ruled out any possibility of having peace as long as Israel is still occupying



Thousands gather in solidarity with the 415 Palestinian evictees, at the Roman amphitheatre, downtown Amman, Friday

Arab lands, and as long as the U.S. is supporting Israel.

Deputy Hammam Saeed who heads the Islamic Committee for Supporting the Palestinian People said in an address that the deportees explicitly demonstrate how people merge with their land to form one entity. "Human beings are not linked to their land with an identity card, a passport or material interests; was it the case, the deportees would have found a substitute for Palestine," he said. "They are attached to their land because it is the holy land, the land of faith and belief," he added.

Secretary General of the Arab Doctors Federation Hassan

Khreis said the deportation was another crime in a series of repressive measures committed by the Israeli occupation forces against the Palestinian people. The massive deportation is a crime violating international law, the Fourth Geneva Convention, the International Declaration on Human Rights, the U.N. charter and all human norms, he said.

Dr. Khreis said Israel was encouraged to continue its aggression on the Palestinian people and the Arab nation by unlimited U.S. support. "There is a strategic alliance between the U.S. and Israel and a declared U.S. commitment to maintain Israel's military supremacy over

the Arab countries." Secretary General of the Popular Committee for Supporting the Palestinian Uprising Mamdouh Abu Hassan said all occupation forces are destined to vanish. "This amphitheatre which was left behind by the Roman occupation forces testifies that occupation will end as happened in this region when the Romans, the Crusaders and others have left."

Dr. Abbadi said his committee has presented JD 5 million to the Palestinian people since the uprising started in 1987. The committee, he said, has moved and formed with the Islamic Committee for supporting the Palestinian People a committee of solidarity with the deportees.

The British Council  
المجلس الثقافي البريطاني

## VACANCY

The British Council is seeking to employ an outstanding individual for its key post of

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(male or female)

The postholder will be responsible for the effective and efficient management of the financial and administrative functions of the office, including the management of ten members of staff.

Candidates should be educated to degree level or above, and have at least ten years experience in a managerial position. They should be able to demonstrate the following:

- Fluency in written and spoken English and Arabic.
- Experience of managing budgets and preparation of accounts.
- Interpersonal skills and initiative, with ability to manage and motivate staff.
- Computer skills (Lotus 1-2-3 and financial packages) are highly desirable.

A full job description for the post is available for collection from the British Council, Rainbow Street, off First Circle.

**Candidates fulfilling the above conditions should submit their CV and a hand-written covering letter to the Director, British Council, P.O.Box 634, Amman, no later than January 20, 1993.**

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### Sunday's Economic Pulse

## Salaries hiking — why not?

By Dr. Fahed Al Fanek

Raising the scale of salaries is no doubt a good thing in itself. It means raising the standard of living of all salaried people, starting with the public sector which employs around 40 per cent of the labour force in the country, followed by the private sector which employs 50 per cent of the labour force, assuming that 10 per cent of the manpower are self-employed.

However, there are at least three problems facing such a proposition:

The first problem is that the budget for 1993 still has a net deficit of JD48 million, plus the value of instalments payable on internal and external indebtedness, amounting to JD311 million, plus interest and principal due on the indebtedness of the "armament fund" which is dealt with off-budget and exceeds JD200 million in 1993. Around JD290 million of the above sizeable deficit will be covered by fresh external borrowing, amounting to JD290 million, and internal borrowing, amounting to JD70 million. Any increase of salaries and wages, beyond the usual annual increments allowed for in the budget, will be added to the above deficit.

The second problem is that what we call raising the standard of living by raising salaries is nothing but raising consumption without a corresponding increase in production, and raising imports and

widening the deficit in the trade balance and the balance of payments. It was determined that each JD100 of extra cash income is bound to cause JD50 of extra imports.

The third problem is that the government practically adopted the policy of creating more jobs, even at the expense of inflating the public administration apparatus. The government is planning an increase in civil service staff by six thousand in 1993. The logic behind this policy is that creating jobs for the unemployed has priority over improving the income of those who already have jobs, especially when sufficient funds to satisfy both desirable objectives are unfortunately not available.

Therefore, the members of Parliament who called for hiking salaries by JD20 each in this election year, may gain some popularity. They will raise the expectations of the employees which, most likely, will end up in disappointment, but they may be rightly accused of political opportunism. They are pressuring the government to make difficult decisions that will definitely increase the deficit in the budget, cause more consumption and importation, and reduce the capacity to create new jobs. Those Parliament members therefore are required to support their demands by specific sources of new financing, or ways and means to reduce expenses, that are practical,

acceptable, and make sense.

We are entitled to be told whether the Parliament members, especially the Muslim Brotherhood bloc, want the government to step up external borrowing or to order the central bank to print more inflationary money to finance the treasury or if they prefer to hike taxes and fees. There is no other way to raise around JD100 million to finance their suggestion which entails more recurring public expenditure.

Until such time when the Finance Committee comes up with a specific reply, it would not be fair to report to the public that the Parliament, the Brotherhood bloc or the Finance Committee demanded an increase in the salaries of civil personnel. It should be reported to the people that the above politicians are asking for more deficit in the budget, more consumption, more imports, less new jobs, and a setback in the march towards self-sufficiency and financial independence. In other words, they are acting irresponsibly.

In this democratic environment there is no room for political opportunism. Those who make popular demands should call a spade a spade, otherwise we shall translate their code language as we have done above. Popularity is not that cheap and easy to come by any more. It takes responsibility, creativity, and courage.

## Compliance needs will

AS 415 Palestinians expelled from the occupied territories prepare to spend their 18th night in freezing weather conditions in the Israeli-occupied "security zone" in southern Lebanon, Israel continues to make a mockery of international law and United Nations Security Council resolutions.

To the dismay, yet in no way to the surprise, of those familiar with its belligerent policies in the region, Israel has proposed a solution that it knew would be rejected not only by Palestinians and Arabs but also by all countries and organisations who uphold international law and respect human rights.

Stop the infitadah and the expelled Palestinians will be allowed to their homes in nine months, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's unacceptable proposal said. He knew perfectly well though that the infitadah is an expression of a people's rejection of occupation. Furthermore, Rabin knows Palestinian struggle will not stop before his tanks and special killing squads end their colonisation of Palestinian land.

Practically speaking, the Israeli proposal is unacceptable, first, because it is an ugly form of political blackmail and, second, because it compares a legitimate struggle for independence and dignity to a brutal act of denying people their basic right to safe and dignified life in the land of their ancestors. Israel's expulsion of the Palestinians was a clear violation of the rights of people living under occupation as stipulated by the Fourth Geneva Convention. Rabin's refusal to redress this grave wrong is therefore yet another example of his government's defiance of and disregard to international legality.

U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali has said he will ask the Security Council to take the necessary measures as "it sees fit" to end the plight of the evictees when his special envoy to the area told him of the failure of his mission.

Necessary measures that the Security Council should "see fit" must mean working out a mechanism that would force Israel to abide by U.N. resolutions. The issue is crystal clear: The Security Council issued Resolution 799 demanding the return of the expelled Palestinians to their homeland; Israel has rejected the decision; and, as has been the case with Iraq, Yugoslavia and Libya after the birth of the "new world order," the "fit" action should allow for punitive measures against Israel.

Israel has too often rejected U.N. resolutions because it counted on the support of its allies, mainly the U.S. It would naturally continue to reject 799 and all other future resolutions unless the U.N. gives it reason to believe that this time around it means business and will force compliance with those resolutions.

Under the "new world order," this should not be too much to expect from the United Nations, or is it?

### ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RAY Saturday said that the Israeli leaders have been resisting Arab countries' endeavours to establish a permanent and just peace in the region, noting that the deportation of Arab citizens to Lebanon was just another instance of the obstacles that the Jewish state is placing in the path of peace. The Israeli media is now blaming the Arabs and the infitadah for the failure of the peace process, but it is saying nothing about Israel's organised acts of terrorism and intimidations against the Palestinians and the stubbornness of the Israeli negotiators and the Israeli government at the peace process that rendered the talks futile so far, added the daily. The paper said that the deportation of the Palestinians from their homeland was perhaps the straw that caused the break of the talks although previous Israeli actions and atrocities were also intended to achieve the same goal. The Israeli media can by no means absolve the Israeli leadership of the crime it has committed and can by no means change the facts on the ground and brighten the Israeli image before the world, said the paper. The daily added that shedding crocodile tears over the failure of the Middle East process can by no means improve the situation and help the talks succeed. Only when Israel stops its atrocities, repatriates the deportees, accepts the U.N. resolutions and shows willingness to implement Security Council resolutions on Palestine can the whole region enjoy peace, said the paper. It said that as long as Israel continues to abort Arab countries' bids to achieve the aspired, just peace, the cycle of violence is bound to continue and peace will remain absent.

SAWT AL SHAAB daily tackled the border dispute between Egypt and Sudan. Any Arab citizen can only express regret and deep pain over the news that Egyptian troops have invaded Sudanese territory, violating all principles and laws and further causing damage to inter-Arab relations said the daily. Egypt's unexpected step against Sudan at this moment can only give justification to suspicion and anxiety, which has long haunted the Arab masses in the two countries who have feared a confrontation, said the daily. Egypt should have learnt the lesson from the Gulf crisis that only through dialogue and a peaceful negotiation can an amicable settlement be reached between neighbours and not through confrontation that tends to cause further divisions among the Arab states. The paper said that while Cairo is more than any other Arab capital enthusiastic about ending the conflict with the Israeli enemy by peaceful means, it is trying to settle its dispute with Sudan by force, something which is detrimental to Arab national interests.

The commissioner-general of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) submitted his annual report to the General Assembly of the United Nations on Nov. 2, 1992. His report covered UNRWA's activities during the period July 1, 1991 to June 30, 1992.

UNRWA was established as a subsidiary organ of the United Nations by virtue of General Assembly Resolution 302 (IV) of Dec. 8, 1949. Its field of operations covers Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, the West Bank and Gaza Strip. UNRWA was intended to be temporary, as it was hoped that the Palestinian problem would soon be solved and the Palestinian refugees would be allowed to return home, in accordance with General Assembly Resolution 194 (III) of Dec. 11, 1948. It seems though that the temporary nature of the agency has confirmed the saying that the temporary endures; and thus the agency's life has been extended for two or three years at a time up to 1993, so far. The General Assembly has this year extended the agency's mandate for another three years, effective as of June 1, 1993, but, as usual, without prejudice to the provisions of Paragraph II of General Assembly Resolution 194 (III) mentioned above. This paragraph stipulates that the Palestine refugees should be given the choice to either return to their homes and live in peace with their neighbours or, those choosing not to return, be paid compensation for their property. This provision has never been implemented due to the refusal and intransigence of Israel.

#### Duties

Initially, by Resolution 302 (IV) mentioned above, UNRWA was given two main duties: first, to carry out, in collaboration with local governments, the direct relief and works programmes for the Palestinian refugees, and second, to consult with the interested Near Eastern governments concerning the measures to be taken by them preparatory to the time when international assistance for relief and work projects is no longer available. The resolution had also set up an Advisory Commission to advise and assist the agency. The present Advisory Commission consists of representatives of the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Belgium, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Japan. It should be remembered that UNRWA is to be clearly distinguished from the United

Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, established by General Assembly resolutions 319 (IV) and 428 (V) of 1949 and 1950 respectively, and which excludes the Palestine refugees from its scope.

In the course of time, UNRWA has evolved from a body primarily devoted to meeting the relief needs of the Palestine refugees displaced by the 1948 war into one concerned with the administration of quasi-governmental services, such as public education, public health, vital statistics, social welfare, in addition to purely relief assistance. Through the tireless efforts of the previous commissioner-general, Dr. John Davis, and his deputy, the late John Redaway, the agency concentrated its activities from 1959 to 1964 on the classical and technical education of the Palestine refugees. As a consequence, scores of vocational centres and schools were built in the five fields where the agency operates and a good number of Palestinian students were sent for training in various technical professions to England, Germany, France, Sweden and Denmark. Dr. Davis believed that the training given at the agency's vocational centres will enable graduates to get employment easier and, hopefully, to remain employed and self-supporting throughout their lives.

Fortunately for the agency, it is presently headed by an energetic commissioner-general, Ilter Turkmen, who, from his declarations, reports and activities, shows that he has fully grasped the human and political dimensions of the Palestine problem. Of course, in his high capacity as a United Nations official, with the rank of under-secretary, Mr. Turkmen is expected to be impartial, but this does not prevent him from observing and reporting with objectivity on the tragic events which occur to the Palestinians in the occupied territories.

#### Predictions

In his introduction to the annual report, the commissioner-general states: "It is to be hoped that the year under review will be remembered as the one in which moves began towards a settlement of the Palestine question and the broader Middle East conflict. The historic meeting in Madrid, in October 1991, attended by Israel, the Arab states and a Palestinian delegation, was followed by further meetings in Washington and discussions on a number of issues, including the refugees question, held in Ottawa in May 1992."

But the commissioner-general adds: "In sharp contrast to the optimism created by the opening of the peace talks, the situation in the occupied territory of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip remained critical, since no significant relaxation in the traditional pattern of Israeli occupation policies occurred. In general, tension remained higher for several reasons. The lack of correlation between positive developments at the political and diplomatic levels and events affecting the daily life of the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, were a cause for concern. Conditions in the refugee camps, especially in Gaza, were appalling for many of the inhabitants. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for the Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) repeatedly emphasised the need for peace negotiations at the international level to be accompanied by confidence-building measures affecting the daily life of the Palestinians in the occupied territory."

Previously, Dr. Davis has predicted the following: "Progress

more so in the occupied territories from Kuwait to Jordan, numbering about 300,000, has increased the agency's burdens. A great majority of them sought UNRWA's assistance in one way or another. There were about 10,000 pupils among the refugees, returned from Kuwait and other Gulf states, which the agency had to absorb in its schools by using the double-shift system.

#### Work in the occupied territories

The commissioner-general reported the following: "The Agency continued to face difficulties in operating in the occupied territory. I was concerned on numerous occasions about the safety of UNRWA staff, both area and international, who met with frequent harassment by the Israeli security forces and, from time to time, threats and attacks by some elements in the Palestinian population. The agency made repeated protests to the Israeli authorities regarding harassment of

attempted to address this problem through its income-generating and job-creation programmes. The loss of remittances which had been sent by Palestinians who had been living in Kuwait and the Gulf states caused serious financial problems for Palestinians living in the occupied territory and Jordan."

The commissioner-general added: "The agency was continuing its contacts with the government of Kuwait regarding the estimated 25,000 to 30,000 Palestinians remaining in that country."

#### Financing

With regard to the financing of the agency, the commissioner-general announced to the annual Pledging Conference, held in New York on Dec. 2, 1992, that the agency has total budget requirements of some \$297 million for its core programmes in 1993 as well as needing \$14 million to continue emergency operations in Lebanon and in the occupied territories. It is therefore of the utmost importance that the states

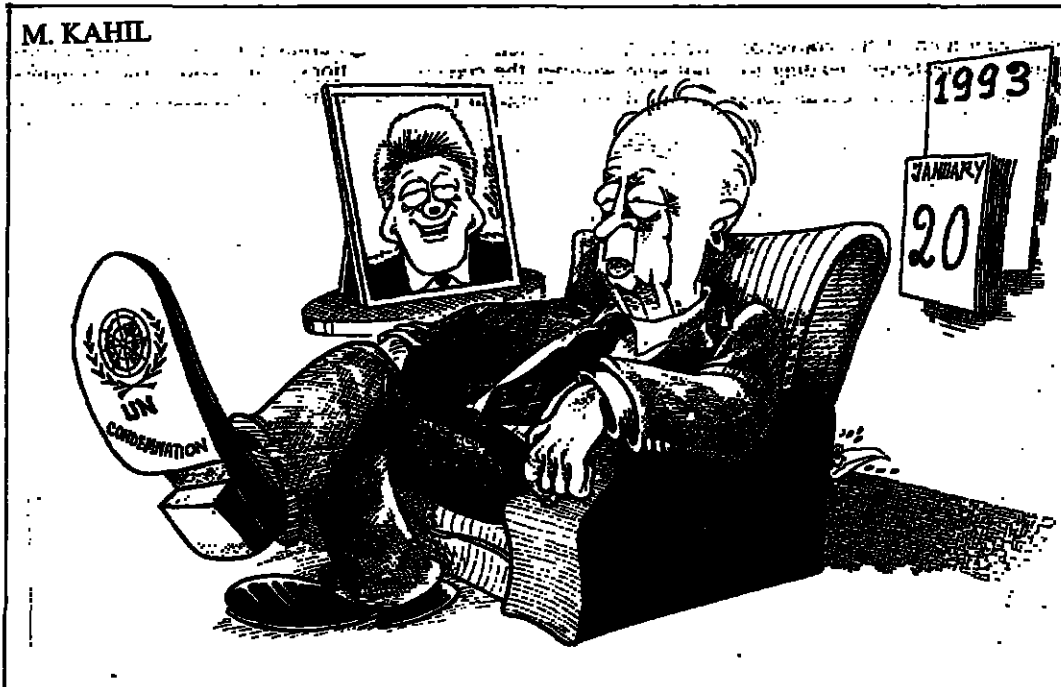
of existence, performing the activities of a government without territory for the benefit of the Palestine refugees. Perhaps turmoil and anarchy would have been the lot of this region. It is therefore in the interest not only of the Palestinians but more in the interest of peace and stability that the agency be fully supported financially to enable it to continue to carry out the duties and responsibilities incumbent upon it.

#### UNRWA's Future

In case peace has been achieved between the Palestine people and Israel (and concurrently between Israel and Jordan, Syria and Lebanon), the agency can play a crucial role. Dr. Davis predicted in 1985 the following: "If and when progress towards enduring peace is made in the Middle East, I can foresee a very useful role for the competent local staff that now comprises the heart of UNRWA personnel. Whether or not they would still carry the banner, they are competent; likely more so than would be any body of staff that might be rallied. This new role for UNRWA staff would be in economic development." On the other hand, Mr. Turkmen stated in his report that: "In the event of the peace process leading to an interim period of self-government, the agency, with thousands of skilled Palestinian staff in the occupied territory and a vast infrastructure, is prepared to play whatever role the parties to the negotiations and the United Nations determine. While we all look forward with hope to the achievement of positive results, the agency's crucial role in providing education, health and relief and social services for the Palestine refugees will continue throughout its area of operations."

The commissioner-general appealed once more to the international community to ensure that the agency is supplied with the resources and support it must have if it is to carry out the will of the General Assembly which represents the international community.

Mr. Turkmen and his staff deserve credit for their abnegation and services rendered to the Palestine refugees and for their efforts in steering the agency under extraordinarily troubled circumstances in Lebanon, the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The annual report was factual and unbiased and it is indeed, among other matters, an incontrovertible documentary evidence of the horrible Israeli occupation.



towards peace in the Middle East is possible, provided that solving the Palestine problem is placed at the top of the peace agenda, and that all parties concerned are involved in a solution of the problem including of course the Palestinian Arabs."

Any reader of the annual report would realise the great difficulties the agency and its staff, local and international, meet in the discharge of their duties in host countries, but emphatically

staff and violation of UNRWA premises by the Israeli security forces. A worrying development was the increasingly aggressive behaviour of Israeli settlers towards the Palestinian population and sometimes towards UNRWA staff and premises. Economic activity in the occupied territory also continued to deteriorate resulting in additional hardship for thousands of Palestinian families. As well as providing assistance to the most needy, the agency

which normally contribute to the agency increase their contributions and those which have never contributed to it start doing so. In my opinion, there is in effect consideration for those contributions made by the world community as the agency has been since its inception an effective stabilising factor in the Middle East. I would not like to envision what would have happened in our region had not the agency functioned during its forty-two years

## When will it be okay to be an Arab?

By Leila Gorchey

WHEN THE fabulous, centuries-old Arab folk tale of Aladdin's adventures was transformed into a Disney feature film, Americans held their breath, eager like, all interested in animation and fantasy, yet wary. The unease stems from years of experience in seeing the Arab image distorted by filmmakers, cartoonists, TV series scriptwriters and news editors.

Common stereotypes have become cemented in the media industry's stockpile of "instant Arabs." These images range from a half-clad veiled flock of belly dancers making up a "harem" for their polygamous "master," to bearded terrorists in urban settings and oil-rich rulers called "sheikhs" of unsavoury desert lands.

Contrary to this past tradition, Disney's "Aladdin" offered two young heroes who did not comply in character with any of the past infamous ones. Jasmine made her

own wedding decisions, the sultan complied with her desires and Aladdin had eyes for only one wife. These values were imparted to moviegoers in an unprecedented way, by Arab characters. But the question remains: What image of Arab culture emerges from the movie? And were these characters presented as Arabs to "Aladdin's" viewers at all?

In numerous films with Middle East-based plots, fictitious cities pop up in what Jack Shaheen has referred to as a "standard, sinister 'Arabland' backdrop... Into the perennial desert the producers drop a military air base or a cheap mock-up of an Arabian Nights palace." For the movie, Disney dreamt up the fictitious city of "Agrabah." Given the numerous films that have been produced and fueled by political agendas, it's often probably better when the locale remains un-

attributed to a real city of the Arab World. Still, the Arab can always be identified through the film industry's traditional reliance on stereotype, which is even expressed in "Aladdin's" surprisingly vicious opening lyric "Arabian Nights."

"Oh I come from a land, From a faraway place, Where the caravan camels roam. Where they cut off your ear It's barbaric, but hey, it's home."

Not only are the characters from this unusual place, they also speak with an unusual mix of accents. The three main characters, Jasmine, Aladdin and the Genie, have Anglo-American accents, while the rest have foreign accents. Aladdin and Jasmine's cultural values are thus presented as "American," representing innocence, subversion of social tradition, freedom of choice and

courage. The ones with foreign (or Arab) accents are mainly conspirators, thieves, guards or the people of the street. If Disney were to be believed, one could come to the understanding that these are foreign, or specifically Arab attributes. In fact, though, pitting Americans against Arabs is not required by the story line and it does a disservice to all non-native English speakers.

The expression of an Arab-American's national origin (through physique and sometimes through accent) still elicits prejudice from many. It has led to such discriminatory acts as airline personnel harassment or crimes of hatred. Most hate crimes recorded in the past four years were committed against Arab-Americans as the United States intervened in Iraq.

In the collection of tales recorded around the 15th century in Arabic, and which comprise "The

Thousand and One Nights" or "Arabian Nights," Aladdin and Jasmine were actually residents of Baghdad, Iraq, a city widely considered a centre for Arab culture and civilisation. Though we are speaking of fiction and fancy, the obscure reference to "Agrabah" precludes viewers from making the association of Baghdad with admirable heroes and heroines, like Aladdin and Jasmine. Both were perfectly content with their Arab heritage in the original version of "Aladdin."

We so challenge Disney and other film companies to offer all-American heroes who demonstrate their Arab heritage with pride and subtlety, while reflecting a balance of character traits like members of all ethnic or national groups. When this precedent is set, the media may be able to let go of their cultural and political baggage. Clearly,

"Aladdin's" purpose is not to have viewers reflect on positive aspects of the Arab World, but why should this not be a possible consequence of its viewing?

In effect, the tale is a rich one of universal appeal, full of insight about human characters, values and goals. Its adaptation should not demean its Arab heritage. One modern example on which Disney was able to put forth an element of Arab culture and combine it with an American saying was when the Genie suggests to Aladdin: "Wake up and smell the hummus." Combining both Arab and American cultures in a phrase is a step in the right direction. It's okay to be Arab.

The writer is media coordinator for the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee. The article is reprinted from The Washington Post.

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## Siege mentality makes Israel feel threatened from every quarter

By Fran Sikorski

Dr. Edward McDonough has experienced first-hand the place of forensic medicine in "politically-explosive human rights issues."

As Connecticut's Deputy Chief Medical Examiner, the Bethel resident vividly describes as a "one-sided experience" his four-day trip to Israel. He was there to observe an autopsy on Mustafa Barakat, a Palestinian student who died suddenly while being interrogated in a West Bank jail.

Although not a member, Dr. McDonough represented Physicians for Human Rights (PHR), a Boston-based organization of 2,500 American doctors, when he went to Jerusalem. He was invited after Dr. Robert Kirschner, Chicago Deputy Chief Medical Examiner, was unavailable and the assignment was given to Connecticut Chief Medical Examiner Dr. Wayne Carver who couldn't go.

"I was in the right place at the right time," says Dr. McDonough. "I was told about the assignment Aug. 5 and left Aug. 6."

Identifying PHR, Dr. McDonough, who lives with his wife Kathleen Johnson and four children, says it is "an organization which concerns itself with the medical consequences of

human rights abuses regardless of the ideology of the offending government or group."

Dr. McDonough arrived in Tel Aviv after a 9,000 mile, 10-hour flight. "I was met at the airport by members of the Palestinian Human Rights group called Al Haq and a female attorney for the family who briefed me on the incident."

"Twenty-three year-old Mustafa Barakat who was from Anabta, had been studying in Amman, Jordan with his cousin for three years. One July 29, he was returning home when he was given a summons to report for questioning, but he did not appear for several days. When he did show up, he was confined at the Tul-karem prison."

"To prevent her brother from being mistreated by a foul-smelling bag placed over his head with his hands tied behind his back, Mustafa Barakat's sister purchased an inhaler at a pharmacy and gave it to him, hoping the guards would show sympathy towards him. I was actually told two stories about the interrogation," says Dr. McDonough.

By observing the autopsy and also questioning the student's family, Dr. McDonough learned

that although he had been troubled by several childhood allergies, Mustafa Barakat had never had an asthmatic attack before he suffered the fatal one in the prison.

Although Dr. McDonough concurred with Israel's forensic pathologist chief medical examiner Dr. Jahud Hiss that the Palestinian's death was the result of an asthma attack, he said his "gut feeling" was that the fatal attack was the result of mistreatment by his Israeli interrogators, and from being forced to wear a "foul-smelling fabric bag over his head with his hands tied behind his back during the lengthy interrogation."

"Dr. Hiss conducted the autopsy and I was the independent observer. Mustafa Barakat's family wanted an autopsy because no one could remember his ever having an asthma attack."

"We also met with several Israeli officers and the meeting was conducted in Hebrew. I was shown the quarters where the student, who was to be married Aug. 8, was detained. The cell was hot with no window, and that's where the fatal asthmatic attack occurred. My report shows the student died from an asthma attack, but you could

have an asthma attack anywhere. I concluded that the condition was brought on by the stress of being interrogated. There was no question the cause of death was asthma. "The autopsy," says Dr. McDonough, "revealed the student's lungs were highly inflated like a balloon, which is a textbook example of post-mortem asthma. Mustafa Barakat died of a disease which he didn't have. He wasn't shot or tortured, nor were there any blunt blows to his body. His death was also recorded as the fifth while in custody."

"The reason for being questioned was that he spent three years in Jordan and was a suspect," says Dr. McDonough whose offices are located at the University of Connecticut in Farmington.

During his stay in Jerusalem, Dr. McDonough says he was nervous, because he had "no idea what he was getting into, but the Palestinians treated me 'like family.' The Israeli officers were cool, but certainly not unpleasant or threatening."

"The Israelis want to get rid of the Palestinians. They say 'Join our country or leave,' and the Palestinians want to rule their own country. The Israelis have

the attitude they will never give up Israel, so they are treating the Palestinians badly so they will leave."

"I am neither Jewish nor Palestinian, but the Israelis saw me from a threatening position. Israel sees itself under siege or almost at war, and therefore there are armed soldiers standing on every corner in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, and I found it somewhat disturbing," says Dr. McDonough.

"I still have difficulty believing I had this opportunity, and it has been quite an eye opener. I have made reports and plan to give a presentation to people in my office and also to students. I will also make a presentation at the national meeting of the American Academy of Forensic Scientists in Boston in February 1993."

"Most of what I saw of Israel was from a car. It is a somewhat bleak country, with olive trees, desert and small mountains. It's like 18th century living mixed with 20th century living, says Dr. McDonough, who was anxious to return home to his family in Bethel after having "one of the most educational experiences of his life." — The Bethel Home News, Connecticut.

## Scientists warn of possible swift change in climate

By Sabine Guez

NEW YORK — Nothing is less certain than today's weather forecast for next month. Wrong! Try forecasting the weather for the next century and you'll find yourself on even more slippery ground. The Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro in June was deluged with alarming, climate-driven environmental predictions and contradictions.

Based on the study of a rare core sample of sediments from the bottom of the ocean, two scientists at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute (WHOI) near Boston, are adding a new twist. The "greenhouse warming" of the planet might lead to sudden shifts in the ocean circulation system which, in turn, could result in dramatic cooling around the North Atlantic, they report. "Our results suggest that the present climate system is very delicately poised," says scientist Scott J. Lehman, author of the new study along with Lloyd D. Keigwin, also of WHOI's Geology and Geophysics Department. The system could snap suddenly between very different conditions with an abruptness that is scary.

The ocean "conveyor belt" circulation system that carries heat from the equator toward the poles drives climate change, according to Mr. Lehman. The two scientists have brought new evidence that the route of the warm ocean currents or Gulf Stream, which keeps northern Europe's air temperatures relatively benign, diverted many times to the south and then back northward again at the close of the Ice Age. It triggered violent climate change in as few as 40 years — next to no time in geological terms. Under the right conditions, the study shows, the circulation system could turn off again — and do so very quickly.

The findings are based on the study of skeletal remains of microscopic, shell-forming animals present in a sediment core taken from the Norwegian sea. Ocean scientists have long used these planktonic organisms, which have known temperature tolerances, as tiny thermometers for tracking water temperatures over time. This is the first ocean bottom core with rates of sediment accumulation rapid enough to document these sudden changes. The core was made available to scientists by an oil exploration firm prospecting off the coast of Norway.

"The warm Gulf Stream current also allows warm-living plankton to live at fairly high latitudes," Mr. Lehman notes. "If we look at these sediment cores and find that those plankton were absent at times in the past, we can deduce that the Gulf Stream was not penetrating as far north as it is today."

Normally the oceans act as a sort of conveyor belt for heat in a journey around the world that is thought to last about 500 days. As the warm surface waters flow through the Caribbean, wrap around Florida and then head north and east, they evaporate and increase in salt content. "As these Gulf Stream waters flow towards the cold Norwegian Sea, they release much of their heat to the atmosphere and become dense enough to sink," Mr. Lehman explains. "This new water mass, known as North Atlantic Deep

Water, then travels south through the Atlantic, around Africa and through the Indian Ocean into the Pacific like a conveyor belt. New warm surface water is drawn northward to replace this water and the cycle repeats itself." A freshening of the surface waters could shut off the circulation system because the subsequently reduced salinity would prevent the water from achieving the density necessary to sink.

"If greenhouse warming occurs and leads to increased amounts of precipitation in the Arctic and/or melting of snow and ice, the Norwegian limb of the conveyor might be threatened, leading to very rapid changes in ocean conditions and climate," notes Mr. Lehman. "In such a scenario, the present climate of Norway and Britain would change suddenly to that of Greenland and Northern Canada." Not only would there be no roses in London for Christmas, but fisheries would also be dramatically affected. Sea ice would increase its fringe to the south, and, as a consequence, fish stocks relying on the presence of warm waters would diminish.

Other scientists, such as climatologist Wallace Broecker of Columbia University, earlier suggested that the circulation system had oscillated between an off and on mode during the last glaciation, which culminated about 18,000 years ago. Some Danish researchers showed that the last of a series of strong temperature variations at that time was marked by sudden warming of probably as much as 7°C in 50 years. Mr. Lehman and Mr. Keigwin could provide the first direct evidence of that process from the high accumulation rate of sediments in the ocean bottom core they analysed. "The problem in resolving events in the deep sea is twofold," explains Mr. Lehman. "First, most ocean sediments accumulate slowly and provide a fairly blurred image of events. Second, the organisms that live on the bottom stir the sediments — what we call bioturbation — so they're taking away the signal you hoped to catch. Cores with such a long undisturbed record (as the Norwegian one) are rarely available to ocean scientists because of the high cost of recovery. The deposition rates are so high that even with a small amount of stirring on the bottom we still see a good signal. That's why we were able to document changes that occurred within decades. Most ocean sediment cores have a resolution no better than 500 to 1,000 years."

The findings indicate that the Norwegian Sea limb of the conveyor belt was periodically turned off due to injections of fresh water at the end of the last Ice Age, between 8,000 and 15,000 years ago. "We know from prior studies that 18,000 years ago, when there were large ice sheets over North America and Scandinavia, the warm surface waters went straight across the Atlantic toward Spain rather than going into the Norwegian Sea as they do today. We found that 14,500 years ago conditions became warm in the northern Atlantic. They were relatively stable for a thousand years, but suddenly switched to cold, then suddenly back to warm again."

Using a recently developed radiocarbon dating technique,

the two scientists determined the age of the planktonic skeletons present in the sediment core, data they used to precisely calculate the rates of temperature changes.

"We found that these changes occurred within 40 years... They correspond to the 'barn door' swinging from its present position to its glacial position and back again to its present position," Mr. Lehman said.

In the last 8,000 years, though, relative stability has prevailed. A cooling of 0.5 to 1°C occurred in Europe from the 16th to 18th centuries during the so-called Little Ice Age, but scientists are still not sure whether the cooling responded to a change in the conveyor belt. What triggers the mode-switching behaviour of the ocean circulation system remains to be thoroughly understood. However, Mr. Lehman and Mr. Keigwin have gathered evidence for meltwater discharge preceding each conveyor-off interval. Extreme warming during deglaciation could also have increased precipitation over high latitudes

— and may do the same again as a result of greenhouse emissions — allowing saltiness to drop to levels that would shut down the conveyor.

Yet, cautions Mr. Lehman, too many uncertainties envelop the greenhouse warming phenomenon to permit hasty conclusions. "If global warming were leading to conditions that were incompatible with deep-water formation in the Norwegian Sea, you could expect very strong regional cooling. But we don't know whether it's going to take much more than some global warming to lead to those conditions," he said. The demonstrated unpredictability of climate change is a cause for concern, however. Mr. Lehman points to the chain of global atmospheric events set off last year by El Niño, a huge pool of unusually warm surface water off the west coast of South America, as yet another example of the intimate ties between the climate and ocean systems. "The ocean has a capacity to behave very abruptly

and without much warning. This to us is worrisome because most (computer) modeling studies of what is going to happen as a result of doubling of CO2 (pollution gases emitted mostly by industries) are predicated on very linear, smooth changes," he says.

A better understanding of how the surface waters freshened at the close of the last Ice Age will help anticipate how the atmosphere could work again in the future, notes Mr. Lehman. But, until further light is thrown on the intricacies of the climate system, the oceanographer recommends prudence. "What I'm afraid of is that the governments are going to be waiting for the scientific community to show without a doubt that global warming will have horrendous consequences. It may take 10 or 20 years for scientists to come to consensus on that issue. And if we wait until then, it may be too late to do anything about levels of greenhouse gases," he says. "By that time, CO2 levels will have tripled not doubled." — World News Link.

## JORDAN WELFARE LOTTERY

Special Issue No. 24

Drawing of

Winning Tickets

Holder of ticket No. <b>80030 A</b> Wins JD 70,000	Holder of ticket No. <b>60823 A</b> Wins JD 20,000
Holder of ticket No. <b>40578 (A+B)</b> Wins JD 9,000	Holder of ticket No. <b>44261 (A+B)</b> Wins JD 7,000
Holder of ticket No. <b>60026 (A+B)</b> Wins JD 5,000	Holder of ticket No. <b>82840 (A+B)</b> Wins JD 4,000
Holder of ticket No. <b>60067 (A+B)</b> Wins JD 3,500	Holder of ticket No. <b>43246 (A+B)</b> Wins JD 3,000
Holder of ticket No. <b>00124 (A+B)</b> Wins JD 2,500	Holder of ticket No. <b>88401 (A+B)</b> Wins JD 2,000
Holder of ticket No. <b>00691 (A+B)</b> Wins JD 1,000	

Ten consolation prizes totalling JD 6,000 each <b>80039 80040 80930 89030 80031 80020 80130 81030</b>	Ten consolation prizes totalling JD 4,000 each <b>60824 60823 60923 69823 60822 60813 60723 61823</b>
Twenty consolation prizes totalling JD 6,000 each <b>40579 40588 40678 49578 40577 40568 40678 41578</b>	Twenty consolation prizes totalling JD 5,000 each <b>44262 44271 44361 45261 44260 44251 44161 45261</b>
Twenty consolation prizes totalling JD 4,000 each <b>60027 60036 60926 69026 60025 60016 60126 61026</b>	Twenty consolation prizes totalling JD 3,000 each <b>82841 82850 82940 83840 82841 82830 82740 81840</b>
Twenty consolation prizes totalling JD 2,000 each <b>60068 60077 60967 69067 60066 60057 60167 61067</b>	Twenty consolation prizes totalling JD 1,500 each <b>43247 43256 43346 44246 43245 43236 43146 42246</b>
Twenty consolation prizes totalling JD 1,000 each <b>00125 00134 00244 00124 00123 00114 00024 01124</b>	Twenty consolation prizes totalling JD 500 each <b>88402 88491 88501 89401 88400 88411 88301 87401</b>
Twenty consolation prizes totalling JD 500 each <b>00692 00601 00791 09691 00690 00681 00591 01691</b>	

Ticket numbers	<b>25834 50134 78069 (A+B)</b>	Win JD 1,000
Ticket numbers	<b>00238 23300 07384 (A+B)</b>	Win JD 1,000

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## Mediators propose splitting Bosnia in Geneva

GENEVA (AP) — International mediators Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen Saturday proposed splitting Bosnia into two autonomous provinces as a way of ending the ethnic conflict.

Mr. Vance told leaders of the three warring factions gathered for their first face-to-face talks that the meeting was the "best chance for peace."

"The process we are starting today can make the difference between peace and war; between life and death for thousands of people," he told the political and military chiefs of the Bosnian government, Bosnian Croats and Rebel Serbs.

The compromise map presented to the meeting by Mr. Vance and European Commission (EC) envoy Lord Owen set out 10 provinces, based on ethnic, geographical, economic and historical factors.

Some of the areas were ethnically mixed. Under the proposals, Serbs would have to give up control of some of the areas they have seized in the nine-month conflict.

The proposals provide for Bosnia to be decentralised with "most governmental functions carried out by its provinces." Foreign policy will be the responsibility of the central government. There was no detail on defence policy.

In a speech explaining the constitutional proposals, Lord Owen said all the provinces except Sarajevo should have separate, elected legislatures.

He said there should be equal representation of all three ethnic groups in Sarajevo to underline its position as an "open city."

He said the Bosnian Serbs, who have seized 70 per cent of the republic, might have to withdraw from areas, including the strategic town of Bosanski Brod, on the border with Croatia. The town was captured last fall after a battle with Croat forces.

The proposals also provide for a single province grouping towns like Tuzla, Foca and Srebrenica that are the scene of heavy battles between Muslims and Serbs.

"We have to choose between

conflicting claims and we cannot stress enough how vital it is that everyone accepts that there cannot be agreement without compromise, sometimes painful compromise," Lord Owen said.

The conference, scheduled to last for up to four days, is widely regarded as the last chance for a peaceful settlement before the U.N. Security Council resorts to military intervention by enforcing its "no-fly" ban against the Bosnian Serbs.

Serb leader Karadzic described the Vance-Owen compromise as "acceptable as a basis for starting the negotiation." However he repeated demands that the Serbs must have their own state.

Croatian President Franjo Tudjman said the proposals were acceptable.

Mr. Tudjman and Yugoslav President Dobrica Cosic were invited in recognition of the influence Serb-led Yugoslavia and Croatia have over the respective factions in Bosnia.

Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic said in a New Year's message that his government would not accept a peace deal forced upon them.

"We have just one solution left: Continue the combat, preserve what is liberated, liberate what is stolen and punish the criminals," he told Sarajevo Radio.

The Serbs have seized over 70 per cent of Bosnian territory in the conflict, which has left more than 17,000 dead and tens of thousands missing.

The drive to create ethnically separate areas has forced more than one million people out of their homes. Serbs have attracted most blame for the so-called ethnic cleansing.

U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali has termed the conference as a last chance for the peace process.

Pressure is growing for the U.N. Security Council to enforce its "no fly" zone against the Serbs. There have been an estimated 300 military flights since the ban went into force at the end of last October.

The Muslim-led government

potentially stands to benefit from international intervention. It also hopes that Islamic nations, frustrated by what they see as international inactivity, will break the arms embargo and resume weapon sales to Bosnia.

Government troops are reportedly massed on a strategic mountain overlooking Sarajevo and may be planning an offensive to break the Serb stronghold over the shattered capital.

Sarajevo has been without electricity and running water for three weeks, and U.N. officials say a natural gas pipeline has been cut off. Many houses have had walls or windows blown in.

Reuter adds: In Sarajevo sporadic small arms, machinegun and mortar fire could be heard overnight, but there was no sign of the Muslim offensive the Bosnian capital has been expecting for days.

United Nations officials say up to 10,000 Muslim fighters are massed on the heights overlooking Sarajevo.

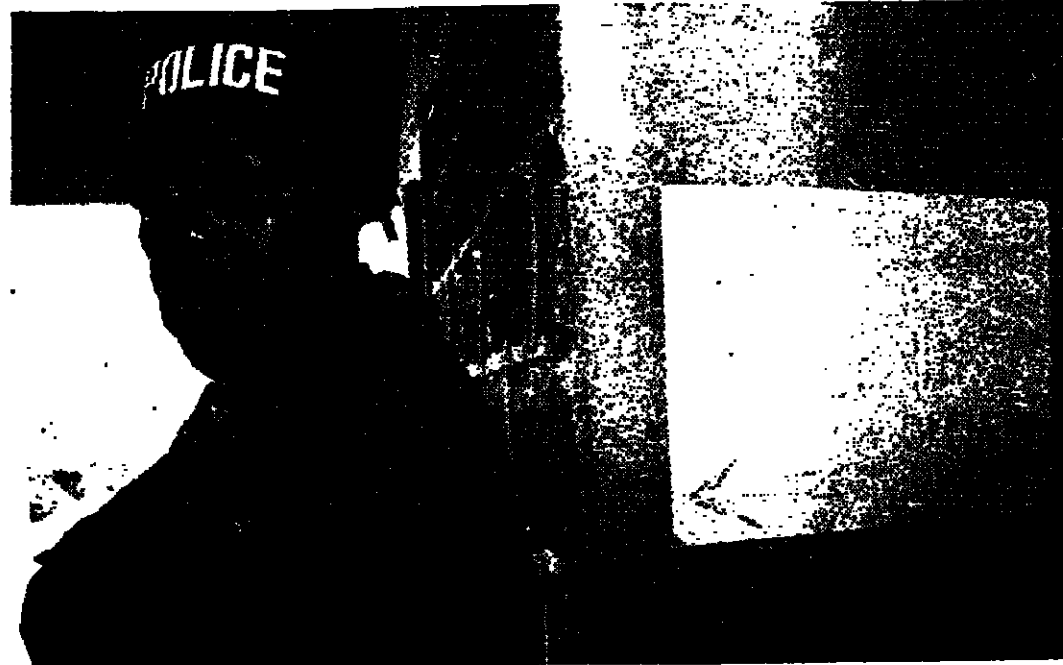
The Bosnian Serb army reported that Muslim fighters had threatened to destroy a dam in eastern Bosnia, releasing toxic waste into the river, which could cause an ecological disaster.

The dam is in the Bratunac district bordering Serbia, an area that has seen heavy fighting on and off for months between Serbs and Muslims.

Spokesmen for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) denied reports that some staff had been pulled out of the capital or that the airlift of relief supplies had been suspended.

They said two UNHCR flights were cancelled Friday because of fears that the fighting might spread but planes were arriving regularly Saturday.

Elsewhere in Bosnia, the government army press centre reported that fighting had died, since Friday but the town of Gradacac in the north was attacked by Serb infantry supported by artillery and fierce shelling of civilian targets.



A Kenyan policeman stands guard outside a vote-counting room (AFP photo)

## Kenyan political crisis deepens after polls give Moi victory

NAIROBI (R) — Kenya's political crisis has deepened after President Daniel Arap Moi indicated that he would crack down on opposition parties if they carried out their threat to reject the results of this week's elections.

"I have restrained myself despite abuse for the last 12 months. This will now cease," Mr. Moi told Reuters television in an interview Friday.

Three opposition parties, Ford-Kenya, Ford-Asili and the Democratic Party (DP) of Kenya, earlier raised the political temperature by saying they would not accept the results of the first multi-party polls in 26 years.

The three parties collectively polled more votes than Mr. Moi in the presidential election and took just under half the 188 seats in parliament, but claim they were cheated of outright victory by rampant ballot-rigging.

Mr. Moi, who has been in power since 1978, vehemently denied the allegations. He described opposition leaders as "liars" and accused them of driving the country towards civil war.

"If they wanted a multi-party system, they should have been the first to accept this result," he added. Fifteen of his ministers lost their parliamentary seats. Final official results were due to be announced early next week. Latest returns last Friday gave Mr. Moi 1.8 million votes to a combined total of 2.9 million for the leaders of the three main opposition parties.

Kenya's opposition fell apart largely along tribal lines after overwhelming domestic and international pressure forced Mr. Moi, 68, in December 1991 to abandon one-party rule.

Fewer people than usual were on the streets of the capital Friday. Many restaurants and night clubs, normally busy during holiday periods, were closed.

"Kenya has totally rejected Moi and we shall be letting the people of this country down if we allowed him to form the next government," Kenneth Matiba of Ford-Asili told reporters after his first meeting in 12 months with rival opposition leaders.

Mr. Moi riposted in the interview: "I have forgiven them for abusing me. But no further, enough."

Large numbers of armed police patrolled Nairobi Saturday. Fewer people than usual were on the streets and many restaurants and night clubs were closed.

European Community ambassadors warned the opposition against violence.

They said in a statement Saturday that however flawed, the polls marked a major step forward in the democratisation process in Kenya.

"The EC heads of mission hope that the opposition will pursue their complaints through constitutional means, including legal channels. The EC strongly opposed to violence from whatever quarter," the statement said.

However, the local National Elections Monitoring Unit (NEMU) said the electoral process had been seriously compromised and the polls could not be said to have been free and fair.

Senior aides said Mr. Moi faced added difficulties in forming a government because his Kenya African National Union (KANU) party won no representation in large areas of the country.



Daniel Arap Moi

Many Kenyans blamed the opposition for failing to cash in on Mr. Moi's unpopularity by fielding one rival candidate. Others claimed that he bullied his way into retaining power through a combination of corruption and misuse of state power.

Deputy DP leader John Keen appeared to voice the views of many people in Nairobi, a stronghold of anti-Moi sentiment.

"I told my colleagues Moi would win if we did not field one candidate for president but they would not listen. The result is that we have badly let the people of our country down," Mr. Keen told Reuters.

"The people kept faith in us and voted against Moi, but it is he who will form the next government."

Many people fear violence, never far from the surface in Kenya's stormy politics, will now replace dialogue.

In a sign of concern over the crisis, the Commonwealth secretary-general, Chief Emeke Anyaoku, will arrive in Nairobi Sunday for talks with all sides, diplomats said.

## Hindus resume prayers at Ayodhya after court order

NEW DELHI (Agencies) — Jubilant Hindu devotees, watched by armed troops, resumed prayers Saturday at a disputed shrine in northern India after a court ordered the lifting of a government ban.

Authorities had stopped prayers to avoid Hindu-Muslim clashes at the site, where Hindu militants tore down a 16th-century mosque Dec. 6, setting off nationwide riots that killed 1,200 people.

About 60 saffron-robed ascetics and small groups of devotees blew conch shells and chanted hymns in front of a makeshift canopy temple, which Hindus hastily constructed after tearing down the mosque, Press Trust of India (PTI) reported.

They were among 90 holy men who ended a four-day hunger strike to protest the government order halting prayers at the site in the town of Ayodhya on Tuesday.

On Friday, a local court ruled that Hindus had the right to pray, but said the authorities could regulate access to the site to maintain law and order. It was responding to petitions by three Hindu religious groups.

Riot policemen kept the devotees about six metres from the temple — surrounded by barbed-wire fencing — in keeping with the court's ruling, PTI reported.

Many Hindus believe Mogul invaders built the mosque on the ruins of an earlier temple marking the traditional birthplace of warrior-god Rama. Both communities have been locked in a decades-old legal battle over ownership of the site.

Prayers at the shrine were suspended Tuesday after Muslims threatened to march to the site to pray. About 200 Muslims fought with police on Thursday in an abortive attempt to reach the site, 500 kilometres east of New Delhi.

**Bangladeshis march**  
About 25,000 people in predominantly-Muslim Bangladesh began marching to India on Saturday to protest against the building of the makeshift Hindu temple.

## Czech, Slovak parliaments confirm birth of two states

PRAGUE, Czech Republic (AP) — Czechs and Slovaks awoke Friday as citizens of separate countries, and their legislatures met in special sessions to confirm the birth of the new nations.

The two peoples split their 74-year-old homeland at the stroke of midnight at New Year's, culminating separatist sentiment unbroken by the demise of communist rule in 1989.

New Year's celebrations in Prague had little on the program but to commemorate the split. But revellers in Bratislava, the Slovak capital, cheered the event, their new flag and independence speeches by their leaders.

Many Czechs and Slovaks continued to oppose the demise of Czechoslovakia, but it gathered speed after June 1992 with the elections of two regional governments markedly different in style and goals.

Czech Premier Vaclav Klaus pushed ahead with market-oriented reforms, determined to bring his republic of 10 million people into the European mainstream as quickly as possible.

Populist Slovak Premier Vladimir Meciar wanted more autonomy from Prague to set a slower pace for a republic already suffering from 12 per cent unemployment, and an economy dependent on inefficient communist-era factories.

Many in Slovakia also welcomed independence after centuries of playing second fiddle — first to Hungary, which ruled Slovaks until after World War I, then to the more populous and urban Czechs.

But unlike Yugoslavia and the former Soviet Union, where nationalist passions have translated into war, Czechoslovakia's split was accomplished peacefully, a fact Mr. Klaus emphasized with pride Friday.

"We had to prove that even such a painful act as a division of state...can be done in a civilised and cultured way," he told Czech Radio.

Mr. Klaus said the split was inevitable, but that the new realities should allow cooperation with Slovakia and strengthen stability in Central Europe.

## Clinton plays football after running, cycling and playing golf

HILTON HEAD ISLAND, South Carolina (R) — Evoking memories of the Kennedy years, President-elect Bill Clinton played touch football Friday — and won. On New Year's Day, Americans traditionally watch college football championships on television. But Mr. Clinton and his 12-year-old daughter, Chelsea, played their own game. Onlookers were more interested in Bill and Chelsea, as they were called by their teammates, than in the game, which Mr. Clinton's team won 21-7. Touch football was a favourite game of John F. Kennedy and his friends during his presidency. Mr. Clinton's wife, Hillary, did not watch the game, retiring to their borrowed house after a bike ride with her husband. After the game Mr. Clinton signed autographs and took special care to meet children who came up to him. One kindergarten student boasted that she was the only one in her class who had voted for him. Even though he stayed up until after 1 a.m. to greet the New Year, Mr. Clinton was up and on the beach of this resort island at 7 a.m. for a five kilometres run, aides said. He later played 18 holes of golf. Mr. Clinton visited Hilton Head for a "renewal weekend," a four-day seminar that brought together 1,500 people for discussions on topics ranging from the federal budget deficit to "What I've learned about love." He returns to Little Rock, Arkansas, Sunday.

Philadelphians (AP) A convicted killer who decided to surrender after more than two years on the run at first couldn't persuade police to take him in. The problem? His celebrity sound-alike name — Gerald Rivera. Rivera walked into police headquarters Tuesday, demanding that he be returned to his old prison cell. "He was looking for three square meals a day," said Kelly Cruz, a state trooper who served as a Spanish interpreter. "He told me that he was out of work and that he was looking for a place to stay, without a car. But it wasn't simple for Rivera to surrender because his name is the same as the host of the show 'The Rivera Show' (Rivera). I thought the guy may be a 302," said Cruz, using police jargon for mentally unstable. "He was belligerent. But a crime computer check confirmed his identity. Within hours, Rivera was escorted back to prison. State police said he would be charged with escape. Rivera failed to return from a weekend furlough in June 1990. When he fled, Rivera had served five years of an eight to 20-year sentence for third-degree murder in the 1984 shooting of an acquaintance.

**China to stage first nude scene**  
PEKING (R) — China's avant-garde theatre scene is testing new frontiers in the New Year by staging the country's first nude scene this week — at the China Children's Art Theatre, the official China daily said Saturday. "Harbour of the sun" is expected...to make waves in artistic circles because it contains the first nude scene ever staged in China," the newspaper said. "The play...will no doubt be warm...even hot — but it will be anything but peaceful," it commented. The play, performed by the Central Experimental Modern Drama Theatre, is "about the awkwardness of human relationships and the rapid changes in society, the newspaper quoted director Xiong Yanwei as saying. China's communist government has puritanical attitudes about sex in literature and art. Pornography, which is defined very broadly, is one of the six evils the Communist Party has vowed to eradicate from society. But in recent months, as the country has experimented with bolder economic reforms, intellectuals and artists have tried to test the limits on their freedom of expression.

**Doctor gets off on the wrong foot**  
NICOSIA (R) — Iran has expelled a Bangladeshi doctor who operated on the wrong leg of a patient with a broken bone. The Iranian News Agency said the doctor, who was working at a hospital in Semnan, southeast of Tehran, had been given one month to leave Iran.

### WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

#### FBI said investigating Perot allegations

DALLAS (R) — The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in Dallas is probing allegations against workers for billionaire Ross Perot's unsuccessful campaign for the U.S. presidency, the Dallas Morning News reported Friday. The newspaper said the allegations were that workers conducted background checks on campaign volunteers by breaking into computer systems of companies that issue credit reports. The report quoted former Perot state campaign coordinators and officials at an Atlanta credit reporting company as saying that stolen security codes were used to obtain credit files of campaign workers. Two former campaign workers told the newspaper that they had been contacted by the FBI and asked to provide more information about the allegations. The Secret Service and Federal Trade Commission also are investigating the allegations, the workers told the paper.

#### Nearly 17 million Chinese hit by drought

PEKING (R) — Nearly 17 million people in China are suffering from an acute shortage of water because of months of drought, the official China Daily said Saturday. The low rainfall in south and central China had hit the main part of China's winter wheat growing area, the newspaper said. Some 5.8 million hectares of farmland and 16 million domestic animals have been affected. One of the worst hit provinces has been Hunan, which has had the lowest rainfall recorded in more than four decades. About 330,000 hectares of crops have withered and died in the province, which has reduced its winter wheat growing target. The newspaper did not say what the new target was.

#### Japan executives see Clinton tougher on trade

TOKYO (R) — A majority of top Japanese business executives fear U.S. President-elect Bill Clinton's administration will exert pressure to open Japan's markets wider to American goods, a poll released Saturday said. A survey of 100 business leaders conducted by the Kyodo News Agency showed about 60 per cent worried Mr. Clinton would adopt tougher trade policies against Japan, including revival of the retaliatory "Super 301" authority and higher taxes on foreign companies. Super 301, which expired two years ago, allowed Washington to impose tariffs of up to 100 per cent on exports of a country that refused to open its markets to American goods. In July the U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill, now before the Senate, to renew Super 301 for five years. Japan's trade surplus with the United States rose to \$43.44 billion in calendar 1991 from \$41.87 billion in 1990. Economists say it is likely to hit \$45 billion in 1992. Conventional Japanese wisdom holds that Democrats are tougher on trade than Republicans, but many Japanese hope Mr. Clinton will be an exception.

#### Former astronaut must pay \$240,000 in fraud case

PRESCOTT, Arizona (AP) — A former astronaut who walked on the moon must pay more than \$240,000 for defrauding nine investors in a partnership he organised, a judge has ruled. David R. Scott, 59, of suburban Los Angeles, raised about \$2 million from some 35 investors in 1980 for a programme to develop technology to prevent mechanical breakdowns that could cause aircraft crashes. But the partnership failed to develop any such products and the money eventually "found its way into his pocket," said Jon A. Titus, a Scottsdale lawyer whose firm represented the nine investors in a civil lawsuit. Mr. Scott, a West Point graduate and former air force test pilot, flew on the Gemini 8 and Apollo 9 flights before commanding the Apollo 15 moon landing in 1971. He left the space programme in 1977, to go into business.

#### 3 die in gunfight in Mexican state

MEXICO CITY (R) — Three people were killed and 13 others injured Friday in a gunfight that erupted during the inauguration of a new municipal government in the western state of Michoacan, the government news agency Notimex said. The shooting, which lasted 10 minutes, flared when members of the opposition Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD) tried to stop elected officials from the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) from taking power in the town of Yurecaro, state officials told the agency. Some of the injured were hurt in the ensuing panic as people attending the inaugural ceremony tried to flee the scene.

## Despite START II, nuclear nightmare has not gone away

By George Godda  
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — While the United States and Russia are taking another giant step away from the nuclear brink, here is a message for those who think the world is finally out of the nuclear woods: Don't bet on it.

Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director Robert Gates calls the proliferation of nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction "perhaps the most dangerous and most urgent" challenge of modern times.

Other experts are hopeful that the START II agreement being signed by President George Bush and Russian President Boris Yeltsin this weekend will strengthen the forces opposed to nuclear weapons proliferation. But

that outcome is by no means certain.

Leonard Spector of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace worries about what he calls the "hostile proliferators" — countries that are both strongly anti-American and that have shown an interest in having their own nuclear arsenal.

Iraq proved two years ago that it was possible to carry out a secret nuclear programme. It was only in the aftermath of Operation Desert Storm that the Iraqi programme was exposed. If war had not intervened, Mr. Spector says, Iraq could have "presented the world with a deadly, destabilising fait accompli."

Iran, among the most anti-American countries, makes no secret of its desire to join the nuclear club. A top Iranian

official, Ayatollah Mohajerni, has said, "Muslims must continue to cooperate among themselves and produce their own nuclear bomb because the enemy has nuclear facilities." But experts believe Iran is at least a decade away from that goal.

Over the short term, Ukraine is perhaps the most worrisome country. It inherited 176 intercontinental ballistic missiles when it broke from the Soviet Union.

It has promised to dismantle them, but as a price, Ukrainian officials are demanding \$15 billion for the task as well as international guarantees for the country's security. The START II treaty be scuttled if Ukraine decides to keep the weapons after all. The fate of the first Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, signed last year,

also hinges on Ukraine's action.

"What Ukraine does will have a very important bearing on what other countries do," says Lee Feinstein of the Arms Control Association. Some may even decide to opt out of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty when it comes up for review in 1995, he says.

Mr. Gates speaks in almost apocalyptic terms about the proliferation issue. He says there are two dozen countries with a capacity or potential capacity for developing weapons of mass destruction — nuclear or otherwise.

He warns that such weapons can fall into the hands of "megamafias, military governments (or) strong men of proven inhumanity."

Mr. Feinstein says that while North Korea has taken some

encouraging steps over the past year, it is by no means certain the country has abandoned its nuclear ambitions.

Given religious tensions in South Asia, Mr. Spector worries about the possibility of a potential nuclear exchange between India and Pakistan, particularly if a strongly nationalistic government surfaces in India.

Brazil and South Africa also have moved away from atomic weapons programmes but Mr. Spector warns that "pro-bomb factions" in both countries, particularly in the military, could eventually prevail.

He sees the recent resignation of Brazilian President Fernando Collor de Mello as a setback because of Mr. Collor's commitment to scrapping the country's bomb programme.